

**GROWTH
MANAGEMENT
and
RESOURCE
CONSERVATION**

DESIGNATED GROWTH AREAS

GOAL: *Promote planned, balanced growth within Designated Growth Areas.*

Designated Growth Areas are planned to accommodate new development and revitalization. Within these areas, the County will concentrate efforts to ensure the viability of communities, while minimizing impacts to agricultural lands and other resources. Harford County's Designated Growth Areas are defined in accordance with the State's Smart Growth initiative. They include: the Development Envelope, designated along the MD 24/MD 924 corridors and the I-95/U.S. 40 corridors; the three municipalities, and areas designated for economic development as well as the HEAT Center and Harford Community College. Because these areas are also recognized by the State as Priority Funding Areas (PFA), they will be given precedence over other areas to receive State funding for improvements to roads, water and sewer, and other growth related needs. The State's Smart Growth law carefully states it is not to be used to encourage growth in rural areas. The nine designated rural villages will retain the prohibitions against public utilities as do all other areas outside the Development Envelope that do not already have public utilities.

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - No expansion of the Development Envelope

The Maryland Planning Act and Smart Growth initiatives required local jurisdictions to map specified growth areas. In Harford County, one of these growth areas is the Development Envelope. The Development Envelope has been diligently studied since the inception of the Smart Growth Program to ensure its consistency with this initiative. Expansion of the Development Envelope was considered for the area between Aberdeen and Havre de Grace, the Stoney Forest area, the MD 543 corridor, and the MD 152 corridor. The analysis of these areas indicated that continuing to build out the Development Envelope should be the first priority, followed by providing for additional growth in the area between the municipalities. Because there is sufficient inventory to address development demands during the life of this Plan, the Development Envelope will not be expanded.

DESIGNATED GROWTH AREA POLICY 1 - Ensure that new development is accomplished in a manner consistent with the Maryland Planning Act, Smart Growth and interjurisdictional coordination efforts.

Implementation Strategies

1. Work with the municipalities to develop policies that direct future growth to suitable areas and existing population hubs.
2. Maintain a sufficient inventory of residential land within the Designated Growth Areas to meet projected needs for the life of this Plan.
3. Provide the essential infrastructure and services that will enrich the quality of life for all citizens of Harford County.
4. Coordinate Capital Improvement Projects with land use policies to provide needed services.

CITIZEN ISSUE 2 – Stop or reduce growth.

Census data indicates that between 1990 and 2000 the County grew at a rate of two percent per year. However, population projections indicate that the average growth rate will decline between 2000 and 2025 (Figure 14). Realizing that growth cannot be stopped completely, and that some growth is inevitable, the County is committed to maximizing the quality of life its citizens experience. Harford County is committed to the application of Smart Growth policies to help ensure that viable and sustainable communities are being built.

DESIGNATED GROWTH AREA POLICY 2 - Strengthen the viability of communities within the Designated Growth Areas to help slow growth outside these areas.

Implementation Strategies

1. Protect sensitive areas by steering development away from these areas.
2. Develop pedestrian-friendly communities with adequate open space.
3. Support the development of public/private partnerships to identify and address community issues and concerns.

CITIZEN ISSUE 3 – Manage growth/better development.

Harford County's planning efforts are focused on existing and new communities. This helps to ensure that the County's built environment is a desirable place for citizens to live and work. It also supports the concept of maintaining the quality of existing communities so that residents want to stay in their community rather than move to other areas of the County thus preventing sprawl. Achieving this requires not only the provision of Adequate Public Facilities (APF) but also a commitment to better development standards.

Harford County is committed to managing growth through a number of legislative tools. APF standards, designated growth areas, density provisions, and subdivision standards are among the legislative measures used. As part of the APF provisions, an Annual Growth Report is published and updated annually. Information and analysis is provided regarding public schools, water and sewer systems, and road intersections. Within this report, any facilities operating below the County's adopted minimum standards will be identified. Major subdivision development will not be approved in school districts where the enrollment exceeds, or is expected to exceed, 115% of capacity. Preliminary plan approvals and building permits in areas served by public water and sewer systems can be approved only where adequate capacity exists in the water and wastewater treatment facilities and in distribution and collection lines serving the area. APF Roads provides the mechanism to require proposed development to make appropriate and reasonable road improvements, based on the development's proposed impact to the road.

Improving the quality of design is especially important. New uses and redevelopment should be completed in a manner that blends with the surrounding community character. The County has adopted flexible design standards and is working on design guidelines. The County has also taken steps to encourage and support redevelopment and revitalization of its older communities. Initiatives enacted for the U. S. Route 40 corridor, can serve as models for similar efforts in other areas.

DESIGNATED GROWTH AREA POLICY 3 - Preserve and protect community character and the environment by providing adequate public facilities and promoting redevelopment and revitalization.

Implementation Strategies

1. Review and update APF standards to ensure their effectiveness.
2. Maintain, renovate, and enhance existing infrastructure to support redevelopment and revitalization.
3. Encourage the use of mixed-use and infill developments.
4. Develop Design Standards that will help to attract quality investment and redevelopment while helping to enhance property values.
5. Focus industrial/commercial development towards the U.S. 40 corridor.
6. Provide transportation services to communities within the Designated Growth Areas to connect residents to shopping and employment centers.
7. Review and revise the Zoning Code to improve landscaping and forest conservation requirements within the Designated Growth Areas.

CITIZEN ISSUE 4 – Maintain the character of the Rural Villages.

Preserving the integrity of rural areas is important for building viable agricultural communities. As a means to retain a sense of place in the rural areas, protecting the character and viability of the rural villages and hamlets is important. Villages will continue to be the focal areas for social, employment, and commercial activities in the rural areas. The villages have specific, designated Priority Funding Area boundaries and each has a unique identity. The heritage of these villages should be respected and preserved.

DESIGNATED GROWTH AREAS POLICY 4 - Promote the charm and nature of the Rural Villages.

Implementation Strategies

1. Review and revise the Village Residential and Village Business District as part of the comprehensive Zoning Code update.

2. Develop Village Design Guidelines to ensure that land uses within the Village Centers compliment and enhance the surrounding rural areas.
3. Encourage infill development in rural villages.
4. Coordinate with the Office of Economic Development to provide small business assistance for the rural villages.

CITIZEN ISSUE 5 – Affordable Housing

Harford County is committed to offering balanced, sustainable communities. Providing a variety of housing types, along with a full range of cost options, is one piece of this process. Rental assistance and homeownership incentives must also be provided. The Department of Community Services oversees a variety of programs that promote homeownership or assist with the rehabilitation of homes. Community Services also administers programs that help to provide housing for the elderly and affordable rental housing. Since demographic trends suggest a growing population base covering a relatively diverse age and income range in Harford County, it is imperative that a variety of housing prices and styles be available to meet these growing needs. It is important that the need for affordable housing for all income levels be met.

DESIGNATED GROWTH AREAS POLICY 5 - Provide a balance and mixture of housing to meet the needs of all income levels and age groups throughout the County.

Implementation Strategies

1. Coordinate efforts with the Department of Community Services to develop a Housing Element Plan as part of the Consolidated Plan.
2. Work with the Department of Community Services to promote affordable home ownership as a means to further stabilize communities.
3. Update the Zoning Code to provide incentives that encourage the construction of affordable housing.
4. Develop flexible design standards that encourage a mixture of housing types for residents at all income levels, including the rapidly growing senior population.

SUMMARY

With the passage of the State Smart Growth initiative in 1997, local jurisdictions were required to identify and map Priority Funding Areas (PFA). Based on the State's guidelines, Harford County developed its PFAs, which are recognized as Designated Growth Areas by this Plan. The County's growth management strategies are designed to provide balance in terms of land use, type and intensity. At the forefront of the growth management strategies is the Development Envelope concept. The Development Envelope is generally defined as an inverted "T" shaped area comprising

the I-95/U.S. 40 corridors, the MD 24/MD 924 corridors, and the U.S. 1 corridor through Fallston. This is the area within the County that is designated to accept development levels requiring public water and sewer service. This Master Plan and Land Use Element Plan continue the Development Envelope concept that was established in the 1977 Harford County Master Plan.

For this Plan, the Development Envelope was evaluated to assure consistency with the 1992 Planning Act, Smart Growth initiatives, and interjurisdictional agreements. The possibility of expanding the Development Envelope has been studied since 1996. In 1998, a task force was established to look at future growth in Harford County. Several options were explored in relationship to growth management and the Development Envelope. Concepts included expansion of the Development Envelope, retaining the 1996 Development Envelope, slowing growth countywide and no growth at all by imposing a countywide moratorium. Based on the work of the task force, and land capacity analysis, the Development Envelope boundary, as defined in the 1996 Master Plan and Land Use Element Plan, is retained in this Plan.

No additional Development Envelope expansion or land use intensity change is proposed because sufficient capacity exists to accommodate projected growth for the life of this Plan, which covers a 10 year period. Therefore, it is the policy of this Plan to direct new growth toward Designated Growth Areas.

Studies also indicate that the County has more than a sufficient inventory of land zoned for commercial uses to meet its needs. Any requests for commercial rezoning will be evaluated based on overall community need and will be subject to a technical analysis to ensure that the proposed change will not generate adverse impacts in the community. It is recognized that the rezoning of underutilized properties may be necessary to provide redevelopment opportunities within the Development Envelope or other Designated Growth Areas.

Essential to achieving managed growth is providing a balanced variety of uses. The effectiveness of the Development Envelope, and the quality of life within it, is dependent upon providing adequate land, services, and facilities to support existing residential areas, commercial centers, employment centers, and future development. Public facilities are provided in a cost effective manner when growth is managed. Directing growth to areas where infrastructure exists, or is planned, reduces the strain on public facilities.

The concept of slowing or stopping growth is not an easy task to implement. Stopping growth would only be a temporary measure to address immediate needs. Managing growth in a way that avoids a crisis is the more extensive issue. Imperative to addressing a crisis is having in place the tools necessary to ensure a good quality of life for current and future residents. As a means to manage growth in Harford County, this Plan encourages redevelopment and revitalization of underutilized properties along the U.S. 40 corridor and within the other Designated Growth Areas. Infill development, which offers a mix of uses, can lessen the strain on the County's infrastructure.

APF standards will continue to be utilized as a method to managing growth in Harford County. Current APF standards will be reviewed and revised to ensure their effectiveness as a growth management tool. Regular evaluations will be necessary to ensure that standards are being met.

Protecting agricultural areas and the rural character of the County remains a major goal of this Plan. Designated Rural Villages are also considered Designated Growth Areas. The extent of the villages is clearly defined by the boundaries established as part of the PFA process. Maintaining these boundaries helps to retain the distinctiveness of the villages and enhances their charm and character. The fact that the villages are Designated Growth Areas does not mandate their growth or development. Rather, this designation acknowledges their role and special status within the rural community as centers that serve the surrounding rural community.

Village Design Standards should be developed to help maintain the rural character of the villages as in-fill and redevelopment occurs. The design and scale of uses that provide needed services should be consistent with surrounding areas. A review and revision of the Village District Standards should also be undertaken as part of the comprehensive update of the Zoning Code to help preserve the rural integrity of the villages. This plan also recommends that the Office of Economic Development work with the village business owners to retain or attract compatible business to the villages.

Offering the residents of Harford County affordable housing options is essential to further the establishment of viable communities. Homeownership is endorsed because it stabilizes communities by giving people a stake in where they live. People who work in Harford County should be given the opportunity to live here. Demographics indicate that there is a rapidly aging population base in the County. Affordable retirement communities and affordable senior housing in suitable areas is important and should be developed consistent with the Senior Housing Plan. These communities should be pedestrian friendly, offer viable transportation options, and present a mix of uses that will service the needs of the residents. Mixed-use communities foster social interaction and public safety.

Harford County, the State and the three municipalities recognize the Designated Growth Areas as a means to promote planned, balanced growth. Strategies are established to foster viable and sustainable communities within these areas. Implementation of these strategies is imperative in order to remain consistent with goals established by various County Departments and the State, to remain compatible with the municipal comprehensive plans, while providing viable communities throughout Harford County. The County will continue to work to foster identifiable communities as areas of cultural, social, and economic activity. This Plan supports creating an atmosphere where people will want to live, shop and work.

REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION

GOAL: *Make revitalization and redevelopment a more viable development option*

Over the last 20 years, many suburban jurisdictions like Harford County have experienced rapid growth. Harford County's population has grown from approximately 115,378 in 1970 to 218,590 in 2000. As a result of the County's land use policies, the majority of this growth has been focused in the designated Development Envelope. This area was first established in the 1977 Master Plan and identified where the County would prioritize capital funds for growth related projects. From 1990 to 2000, an average of 80% of the growth in Harford County has occurred within the Development Envelope.

As this growth occurred, County government has concentrated on providing infrastructure needed to serve current and anticipated residents. Roads were built, water and sewer facilities were expanded, schools were constructed, and land was acquired for active and passive recreation. Programs such as Adequate Public Facilities and Agriculture Preservation were implemented to help maintain the quality of life and reinforce the identified growth boundary.

Concurrent with these growth-related projects, other efforts were initiated to sustain older neighborhoods and commercial areas. Activities included traditional revitalization/beautification projects and the designation of two enterprise zones to provide financial incentives in designated areas along with the development of vacant infill properties (Figure 21). As Harford County neighborhoods grow older, more emphasis will be placed on the revitalization and redevelopment of older residential and commercial areas. To strengthen the County's Land Use Element Plan and growth management policies, a coordinated program for revitalization and redevelopment of these areas must be developed.

Redevelopment is an important aspect of the development cycle of a community. A lack of site and building maintenance often follows when residential and commercial communities fail to retain a healthy occupancy, affecting the appearance of the community as a whole. Existing commercial and residential areas that have experienced decline can be redeveloped and revitalized to become viable and thriving businesses, neighborhoods and mixed use centers. A thorough redevelopment and revitalization program will also help to assure that all residential and commercial areas in the County remain healthy and sustainable.

Redevelopment and revitalization reduce the economic pressure on "green" or previously undeveloped sites outside of the County's Designated Growth Areas. This reduces sprawl and is consistent with Smart Growth as it focuses development in areas that have been designated for growth. By focusing growth in areas that tend to be already served by major public roadways and public facilities, redevelopment reduces public expenditures for infrastructure. Existing open space, farmland and other resources are preserved. Redevelopment can also improve existing environmental problems if a site had contamination from a previous commercial or industrial use.

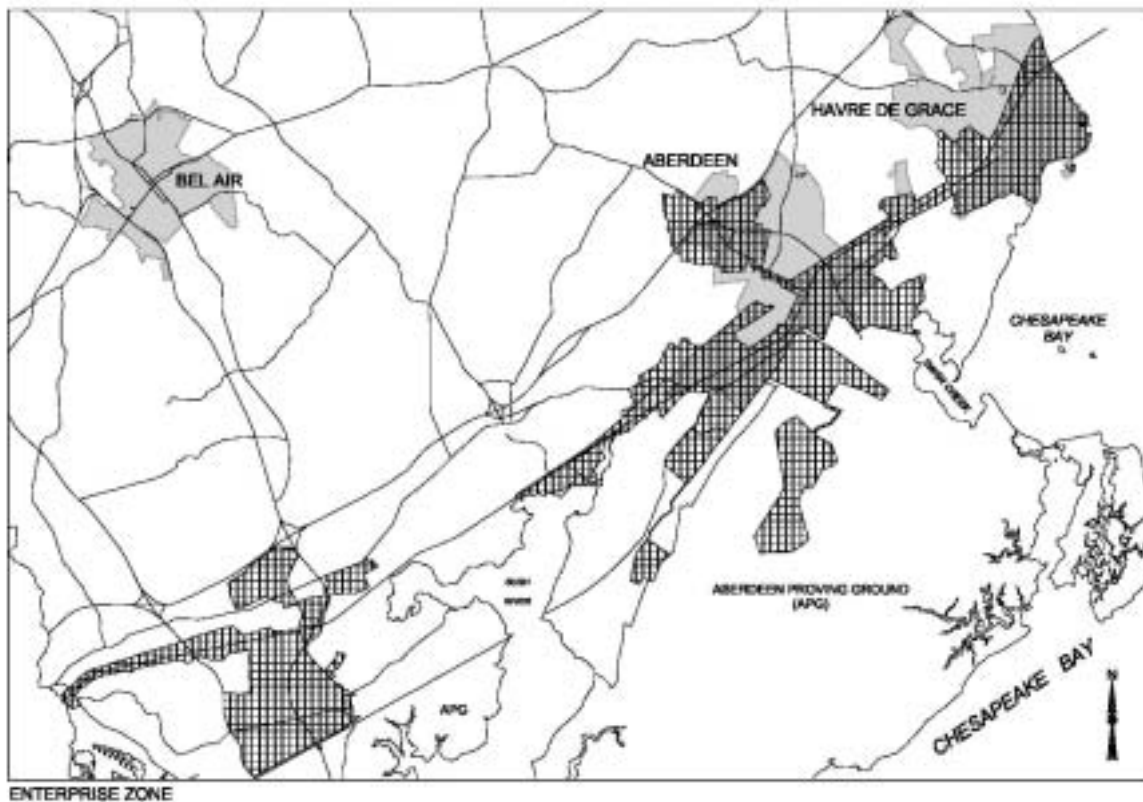


Figure 21

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - Concentrate on U.S. Route 40.

The redevelopment and revitalization opportunities of the U. S. Route 40 Corridor have long been discussed. This area was identified in the 1969 County Master Plan as the foundation for the County's designated growth corridor. The corridor's present state has essentially resulted from the 20th century development of Aberdeen Proving Ground and Edgewood Arsenal and the advent of the automobile. Rich in heritage, U. S. Route 40 began as the first overland facility in the colonies (Post Road) and was later developed as one of America's first landscaped highways. The corridor was also home to Harford's canning industry; at one time the leading canning area in the country.

In order to maintain and improve the quality of life in the U. S. Route 40 Corridor, Harford County has made redevelopment and revitalization a priority. Recent redevelopment projects include the U.S. Route 40 streetscape improvements, renovation and addition to the Edgewood Public Library, Edgewood Farmer's Market, the revitalization of the Aberdeen MARC Train Station, the redevelopment of the Bata Shoe Factory (Water's Edge) and The Village at Lakeside. Planning efforts include the Washington Court redevelopment project, U. S. Route 40 vision workshop, creation of the Joppa/Joppatowne and Edgewood Community Plans and adoption of the Commercial Revitalization Overlay District (CRD) and Edgewood Neighborhood Overlay District (ENOD) (Figure 22).

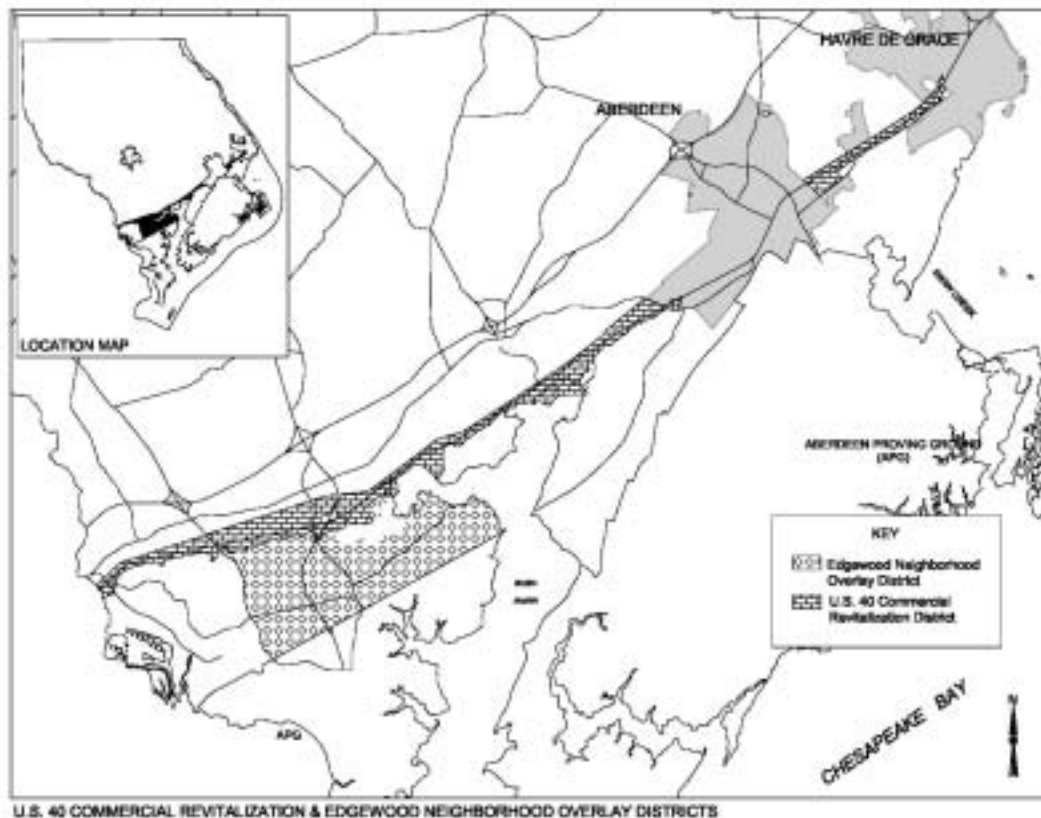


Figure 22

REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION POLICY 1 - Encourage and facilitate the redevelopment and revitalization of older, existing neighborhoods and commercial areas to improve the quality of life for residential and business communities.

Implementation Strategies

1. Create guidelines to improve the aesthetic character of properties along U. S. Route 40.
2. Enhance the Enterprise Zone program to help offset the costs associated with the redevelopment of a vacant structure or previously developed property.
3. Initiate redevelopment and revitalization projects in conjunction with community groups, private business, property owners and other agencies.
4. Coordinate with the Office of Economic Development (OED) to increase public awareness of economic initiatives and efforts for redevelopment and revitalization.
5. Establish a program to identify and clean-up brownfield sites.
6. Review and revise the County sign regulations.

CITIZEN ISSUE 2 - Provide quality design and quality facilities in Designated Growth Areas.

The appearance of a community can affect property values, civic pride and a community's identity. Quality design can strengthen communities and can provide a positive "sense of place". It is important for redevelopment and revitalization efforts because it can aid in the marketability of a site, helping to attract appropriate businesses to an area. Appropriate businesses should complement the appearance of an existing community, and they should support the local community by providing necessary retail or service uses.

Adopted after the Edgewood Community Plan, the Commercial Revitalization District (CRD) encourages revitalization and redevelopment through the development of vacant parcels and the redevelopment and improvement of existing properties. Flexible land use controls and standards are provided to improve the appearance of the corridor and ensure that development is compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods. The Edgewood Neighborhood Overlay District (ENOD) implements the Edgewood Community Plan, providing incentives and encouraging quality redevelopment consistent with the plan. The Dublin-Darlington Community Council is presently working on Village Business (VB) guidelines to help protect and preserve the character of Darlington while assuring the viability of existing businesses and attracting additional businesses.

REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION POLICY 2 - Provide standards to encourage revitalization and appropriate redevelopment in older, existing residential and commercial areas.

Implementation Strategies

1. Develop design/beautification/streetscape alternatives to help create more attractive facades and street frontages.
2. Update the Zoning Code to enhance the aesthetics and functionality of the major roadways in the County through the establishment of appropriate standards.
3. Provide a program of design services and assistance to help navigate the governmental review process for small redevelopment and revitalization projects.
4. Identify opportunities to preserve land of environmental and historic value to provide green spaces and focal points.
5. Update the Zoning Code to include landscaping and screening requirements for redevelopment and revitalization projects.
6. Develop design standards/guidelines that are flexible and encourage redevelopment.

CITIZEN ISSUE 3 - Encourage revitalization of underutilized sites to keep growth down outside the Development Envelope.

As Harford County communities age, it will become necessary to emphasize redevelopment and revitalization. U. S. Routes 40 and 1 are examples of aging commercial corridors. However, it is important to note that underutilized sites and revitalization efforts are applicable to areas beyond the County's Development Envelope. In the past, for example, the rural village of Whiteford had a busy and vibrant main street.

Redevelopment of existing properties plays a major role in building a sustainable community. Sustainability requires that a community continue to adapt to a changing economy while preserving the social, historical and environmental resources that give a community its pride and strength.

With over a million square feet of vacant commercial floor area in the County, it is imperative that these underutilized properties be redeveloped and their surrounding areas revitalized. Redeveloping and revitalizing these vacant businesses and properties will help to improve communities around the County by providing viable, sound and diverse local economies. In order to encourage redevelopment and revitalization, developers and business owners must be provided with incentives. These incentives can be in the form of revolving loan funds, tax breaks or credits.

REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION POLICY 3 - Balance the development of vacant properties with redevelopment and revitalization activity.

Implementation Strategies

1. Continue to support intergovernmental cooperation between the municipalities, the County and Aberdeen Proving Ground to coordinate infrastructure, land use and governmental policy issues on a regular basis.
2. Establish a program and standards for new growth on vacant infill land to ensure compatibility with existing communities.
3. Develop a zoning classification to implement the Mixed Office designation and map the subject properties through the Comprehensive Zoning Review.
4. Establish a process to involve all stakeholders in determining priority projects and programs.
5. Work with community organizations and housing agencies to develop neighborhood improvement plans.

CITIZEN ISSUE 4 - Make it cost effective to revitalize existing sites.

When planning for a new business, business owners and developers are often dissuaded from redevelopment because of the additional costs that are associated with the redevelopment of an existing site or building. One of the biggest challenges often associated with redevelopment and revitalization is building or site demolition and abatement. This can increase a project's budget by up to 35%, as compared to building on green or undeveloped sites.

There are a number of existing programs within the County and State that provide financial as well as capital assistance and incentives for existing communities. The State of Maryland's Smart Growth Program provides opportunities to enhance existing communities through tax credits, transportation improvements and revitalization projects.

REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION POLICY 4 - Identify existing and additional funding sources, financial incentives and zoning changes to reduce redevelopment costs.

Implementation Strategies

1. Develop a joint program between the Department of Planning and Zoning and the Office of Economic Development to offer technical support, incentives, and financial assistance to small businesses for reinvestment and revitalization.
2. Monitor development trends and maintain a proactive response to changes in residential and commercial development patterns.
3. Develop Zoning Code revisions that are consistent with the State's Smart Growth initiative.
4. Develop Zoning Code revisions that encourage the consolidation or reconfiguration of lots to support redevelopment and revitalization.

CITIZEN ISSUE 5 – Walkable/bikeable communities

When redeveloping and revitalizing areas, it is imperative that the existing pedestrian and bicycle paths be improved. Furthermore, creating connections in and between communities can help to revitalize them while reducing car trips. The physical and economic improvement of a community can be complemented by strengthening the connections between the residential and commercial components of the community.

Streetscape design plays an important role in a community's image and interaction. A quality public realm includes a diverse mix of well-maintained public and private buildings that directly front the street. Streets should have streetscape elements such as sidewalks, furniture, lighting, landscaping and public art. Selective placement of these elements can be combined to create a safe, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly public space.

REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION POLICY 5 - Implement a network of bicycles and pedestrian facilities to connect adjacent residential, commercial, employment, recreational and institutional sites.

Implementation Strategies

1. Implement and coordinate strategies and recommendations identified in the Land Preservation and Recreation Plan for bicycle and pedestrian activities in the County.
2. Implement and coordinate strategies and recommendations identified in the Transportation Element Plan for non-motorized transportation options.
3. Establish design guidelines for streetscape elements such as sidewalk materials, light fixtures, signage, and sitting areas at transit stops to enhance or encourage bicycle and pedestrian friendly neighborhoods.

SUMMARY

Redevelopment and revitalization are an integral part of the development cycle. The cycle begins with initial growth or development and is followed by a period of time when optimum growth for the area is achieved. This period is followed by one of decline as businesses age and compete with newer businesses or recently developed commercial areas. After an area has declined, it is customary that a period of redevelopment and revitalization follow.

The participation and cooperation of all stakeholders (municipal, local and State government agencies, community members and business owners) will be needed to redevelop and revitalize areas in the County. Making use of these underutilized areas helps reduce growth pressure, traffic, infrastructure and other related development costs. Redevelopment of vacant properties will help to revitalize aging community areas by providing a commercial area for community interaction. These areas in turn will improve the appearance of a community as facilities are updated to accommodate and attract new business.

The appearance of an area directly affects both the adjoining community and the marketability of vacant sites. Redeveloped sites should be inviting and attractive. It will be necessary to provide guidance to developers and business owners, including design guidelines and buffer standards. Design guidelines are necessary because they provide standards and examples for the prospective business owner and developer. Guidance should also be provided for existing, non-conforming uses. The Zoning Code should be revised to provide regulations for parking, screening, buffers, signage and architectural design that will help to improve the appearance of the site and structure. Screening should be used to lessen the impacts of uses that might detract from the community's appearance.

The physical and economic improvement of a community must be complemented with the strengthening of connections between the residential and commercial components of the community. When redeveloping and revitalizing areas, it is imperative that the existing pedestrian and bicycle paths be improved. Sidewalks and bicycle paths can strengthen community interaction and can help to reduce car trips. They should be used to connect older and new communities and should provide a

safe place for walking and bicycling. This can be accomplished by providing on-street parking, street trees, defined areas for cycling, traffic calming devices and street lights.

Presently, redevelopment efforts are coordinated through the Office of Economic Development (OED). The OED works closely with the Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) and Maryland Business and Economic Development agency to coordinate redevelopment efforts countywide. These efforts, combined with the continuing efforts of the Department of Planning and Zoning are essential for a successful redevelopment and revitalization program.

Over the past few years, these coordinated efforts have been applied in a number of communities throughout the County. County government, working with local and State government agencies, community members and business owners held several visioning workshops in order to build a consensus for the future of the U. S. Route 40 and U. S. Route 1 corridors. The U. S. Route 40 workshop identified first steps, including the development of plans for specific nodes. In 1999, Harford County initiated a comprehensive revitalization strategy for Edgewood; the goal being the improvement of physical, social and economic conditions within the community. The Edgewood Community Plan was completed as a guide for the revitalization efforts in and around Edgewood. Similarly, the Joppa/Joppatowne Plan was completed to outline the goals and strategies for its future development and redevelopment.

The Commercial Revitalization District (CRD) and Edgewood Neighborhood Overlay District (ENOD) are changes made to the Zoning Code after the adoption of the Edgewood Community Plan. The CRD encourages the revitalization and redevelopment in the U. S. Route 40 corridor through the development of vacant parcels and the redevelopment and improvement of existing properties. Flexible land use controls and standards are provided to improve the appearance of the corridor and ensure that development is compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods. Adopted in 2000, the ENOD implements the Edgewood Community Plan, providing incentives and encouraging quality redevelopment consistent with the Plan.

When discussing the redevelopment and revitalization of the County's commercial corridors in Aberdeen, Edgewood, and Havre de Grace, it is important to note that more rural areas like Forest Hill and Whiteford require revitalization as well. As some of Harford County's earliest settlement areas, these rural villages continue to support local industries. These areas and their commercial components, like U. S. Routes 1 and 40, need redevelopment and revitalization in order to remain viable places to live and work. The Village of Darlington and Harford County Government are working together to create Village Business (VB) Design Guidelines. These guidelines are being created to address concerns regarding the protection of Darlington's physical character and economic viability. They will also serve as a template for design guidelines that will be developed for each of the designated village areas.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

As part of the County's growth management program, it is important to address the provisions for community facilities. The County must program appropriate expansions and/or upgrades to existing facilities in order to meet the current and projected needs of its citizens.

For the purposes of this Plan, community facilities include water and sewer systems, transportation, solid waste disposal facilities, schools (including higher education), libraries, parks and open space, police and emergency operations (EMS and Fire). As needed facilities are incorporated into communities, they should be located in a manner which supports good community design and strengthens the area's sense of community. Provision of these services will also be completed in a manner consistent with Smart Growth.

Water and Sewer

GOAL: Protect the health and safety of Harford County residents by providing an adequate supply of clean water and environmentally responsible treatment of wastewater discharges.

The majority of all sewage generated within the Development Envelope is conveyed to the Sod Run Wastewater Treatment Plant (Sod Run). Sod Run serves the portion of the Development Envelope with additional growth potential. As of December 2002, the average daily flow to Sod Run was 11.4 million gallons per day (mgd). The design capacity (average day) is 20.0 mgd, resulting in a net reserve capacity of 8.6 mgd.

As of December 2002, the total combined water treatment capacity of Harford County's three water treatment plants amounted to 22.7 mgd while the average day demand was 12.3 mgd. These quantities equate to an average day reserve capacity of 10.4 mgd.

Title 9 Subsection 5 of the Environment Article in the Annotated Code of Maryland requires that Harford County triennially review, and to the extent the County deems appropriate, comprehensively review and amend its Master Water and Sewer Plan. The semi annual review process mandated by County Code must be undertaken in accordance with State law. The following types of revisions are considered during the semi-annual review process: (1) Changes in capital projects related to the Annual Capital Program or five year Capital Improvement Program; (2) Changes in other components of the County Master Plan that may impact the Master Water and Sewer Plan; and (3) Changes to the service category assigned to a property.

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - Do not expand water and sewer outside the Designated Growth Areas.

The Land Use Element Plan establishes areas that should be designated for public water and sewer facilities. Development shall not be focused into a defined growth area, unless the proper infrastructure is designed and planned for the appropriate level of growth. However, even if a property is within the Designated Growth Area there is no guarantee that public water and sewer facilities will be extended. Extension of these services beyond the Designated Growth Areas could

overburden the system and should be avoided. Therefore, it is critical that the Water and Sewer Master Plan be consistent with the policies defined in the Land Use Element Plan.

The provision of safe drinking water and adequate wastewater treatment facilities is fundamental to public health and safety and the quality of life in a community. Within the Designated Growth Area, these services are provided through systems operated by Harford County, the Cities of Aberdeen and Havre de Grace, Aberdeen Proving Ground, and the Maryland-American Water Company, as well as smaller private systems.

WATER AND SEWER POLICY 1 - The extension of public water and sewer services shall only be provided within Designated Growth Areas.

Implementation Strategies

1. Extend or upgrade public water and sewer services to match expected growth within the Designated Growth Area.
2. Continue to review the semi-annual update to the Master Water and Sewer Plan to ensure consistency with the Land Use Element Plan.
3. Provide capital programming for facility expansion and improvement to ensure that service is available in a timely manner.

CITIZEN ISSUE 2 - Existing water quantity and quality shall be protected.

Over the past few years, there have been concerns regarding the amount of water available to serve the citizens and businesses of Harford County as well as possible contaminants within the water supplies. Such issues as pollutants entering the aquifers in the Perryman area to the availability of water through drought conditions have raised individuals' concern for better protection of water quality and quantity.

Therefore, Harford County must plan to ensure that an adequate supply of water is available and protect ground and surface water sources from pollution and degradation. Generalized public water source protection areas are illustrated in Figure 38 and also discussed in the Natural Resource section of this Plan. These areas include the Perryman and Aberdeen area wells, Winters Run Watershed and Deer Creek Watershed.

WATER AND SEWER POLICY 2 - The County shall pursue the use of alternative water and/or sewer solutions to correct documented health or pollution problems occurring in existing areas of development.

Implementation Strategies

1. Implement and adopt a comprehensive wellhead protection plan as part of the Zoning Code.
2. Monitor and coordinate land use activities to protect water sources from pollution and degradation.

SUMMARY

To fulfill the County Master Plan goal of “a sound, balanced and diversified economy,” water and sewer facilities provided within the Designated Growth Areas must be adequate to support the projected levels of residential, industrial, and commercial development. Outside the Designated Growth Area, private systems will be utilized to serve individual properties. The intensity of development planned for Rural Villages and crossroad commercial areas should be consistent with the capacity of aquifers in the area to provide water and of the soils to accommodate private septic systems. The extension of public facilities to serve uses outside the Designated Growth Area will only be considered to address health issues. This change must be addressed as part of a Land Use Element Plan review. The establishment of private community water and sewer systems, to support new development outside the Designated Growth Areas, is contrary to the principles of this Plan.

Transportation

GOAL: Maintain a safe and adequate transportation system to serve existing and future populations.

There are over 1,400 miles of roadways in Harford County of which 1,005 are maintained by the County. There are over 5.1 million vehicle miles of travel throughout the County on an average daily basis. The County also maintains the Harford County Transportation System, which operates seven fixed bus routes and a demand response system for the elderly and handicapped.

Adequate roadways and transportation alternatives are necessary components of serving the population and enhancing employment opportunities within Harford County. Coordinating land use and transportation is necessary for the creation of an effective and efficient transportation system. Complementing the Land Use Element Plan is the Transportation Element Plan completed in 2000, which addresses in more detail the County’s policies and priorities for maintaining and developing a safe and efficient transportation infrastructure.

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - Impact fees.

Impact fees are charges assessed against new development that attempts to recover the cost incurred by a local government in providing the public facilities required to serve the new development. As the population increases, additional infrastructure is needed to support the increase in population. Therefore, additional resources are needed to fund these capital improvements.

The County has a number of revenue sources that it uses to address transportation needs. These include a highway user tax, gasoline tax, as well as State and Federal grants. Each of these resources is used to fund highway improvements, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and transit. In addition to these funding mechanisms, the County also has developer contributions to improve roadways through the Adequate Public Facilities regulations.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY 1 - Create additional funding mechanisms to facilitate on and off site highway improvements to balance the impact of new development on public resources.

Implementation Strategy

1. Adopt legislation that provides a dedicated new funding mechanism for transportation improvements.
2. Create a comprehensive and coordinated capital program with the County, the three municipalities and State officials to address regional transportation needs.

CITIZEN ISSUE 2 - Expand public transportation.

Public transportation is one alternative which increases the efficiency of the existing road network by relieving congestion on many County and State roads. Providing public bus and rail service within the County provides opportunities for residents to commute to work, shop or school without using single occupant vehicles.

The County currently operates seven fixed route bus services which primarily serve the areas from Joppatowne to Bel Air, and Bel Air to Aberdeen and Havre de Grace. The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) operates three express commuter bus routes from within the County into Downtown Baltimore and the MARC train service with stops in Aberdeen and Edgewood. In addition to these public transportation services, the County operates a Commuter Assistance Program that provides rideshare matching service as well as information on all alternative modes of transportation including bicycling.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY 2 - Continue to support transit opportunities in Harford County including bus, rail and carpooling alternatives.

Implementation Strategies

1. Work with the State to expand public transit service within the Designated Growth Areas and to provide service to the Baltimore metropolitan region.
2. Identify a new or additional revenue source to help fund transit alternatives for County residents.
3. Continue to promote the use of public transportation as an alternative to single occupant vehicles.

CITIZEN ISSUE 3 - Traffic congestion.

Travel in Harford County is mostly accounted for by personal vehicles with only one occupant. The increase in auto use throughout the region has been due to many factors including population growth, County residents' per capita rate of automobile ownership, relatively low gasoline prices and growth in the labor force. Unavoidably, traffic volumes have increased in Harford County. Continuing population and employment growth as well as such factors as changes in travel behavior (for example, more two earner families commuting to work) increasing through traffic (resulting from regional growth) and limited options for expansion of the highway capacity are some of the causes.

Level of Service (LOS) is a set of operational conditions describing the ability of a road or intersection to accommodate traffic. Different scales are used to evaluate the efficiency of vehicular movement on a transportation facility. The LOS operation of a facility is measured by many factors including speed, delay, freedom of maneuver, and frequency of traffic flow interruptions. Increasingly, State and local governments are considering the expansion of highway capacity as just one strategy in an arsenal of multimodal approaches to resolve traffic congestion issues. Some of the other strategies include bus, rail, park-and-ride, and congestion management.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY 3 - Continue to carry out the fundamental policies of the Transportation Plan, which provide a multi-modal approach to maintain facilities in balance with the County's growth.

Implementation Strategies

1. Implement Smart Growth land use alternatives that reduce the need for single occupant vehicles. (i.e. vision concepts for U.S. 1 and Perryman)
2. Continue to promote alternative means of transportation, including pedestrian facilities and bikeways, to reduce traffic congestion.
3. Monitor the adequacy of roadways by continuously updating the transportation forecasting model and roadway inventory analysis.

SUMMARY

To achieve the County's Transportation Element Plan goal of "a complete, safe, and efficient multi-model transportation system," the County must continue enhancing all travel modes. Growth in residential, industrial and commercial development has been focused within the corridors that form the Development Envelope. These corridors contain a considerable transportation infrastructure, including local bus service and MTA flyer service to Baltimore and rail service available through the AMTRAK and MARC (Maryland Rail Commuter) Systems.

To provide the level of roadway and transportation facilities to match planned growth throughout the County, a specific plan of action is required. The County's primary plan for transportation facilities is the Transportation Element Plan. The Transportation Element Plan provides a multi-modal

approach to detailed actions necessary to maintain facilities in balance with residential, commercial and industrial development.

Contained within the Transportation Element Plan are several components supporting development in the County. Recommended highway improvements are identified to bring roadway systems to the level required to serve planned development. Pedestrian and bikeway connections are being promoted as alternative transportation methods. Various forms of transit are also presented to provide alternatives to using automobiles with emphasis on shared commuting options.

The fundamental policies outlined within this section of the Plan set the tone for transportation planning in Harford County. Coordinating land use and transportation is necessary to establish an effective and efficient transportation system. One of the most effective means of coordinating land use and transportation is the creation of a balanced variety of densities and uses that promote pedestrian friendly access and transit use.

Solid Waste Disposal Facilities

GOAL: To preserve and protect human health and the environment by providing a cost effective and self-sufficient solid waste management program.

Harford County provides a quality integrated solid waste management facility for its citizens. The Division of Environmental Affairs within the Department of Public Works oversees Solid Waste Management in Harford County. This Division is responsible for the development of the County's Solid Waste Management Plan, which helps to ensure that the County maintains an adequate solid waste disposal capacity for the next decade and beyond. A variety of programs comprise the integrated waste management system. In addition to the Harford Waste Disposal Center in Street, there is also a highly successful and extensive recycling program, and the Harford Waste to Energy Facility in Magnolia that burns most of the municipal solid waste to produce energy that is purchased by Aberdeen Proving Ground. The County is also actively involved in the remediation and monitoring of old landfill sites to protect public health and the environment.

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - Ensure that the County maintains sufficient capacity for its solid waste needs in the most environmentally sound manner.

The Harford County Solid Waste Management Plan presents a strategy to ensure that solid waste in the County is reduced to the greatest extent possible and disposed of properly. The Harford Waste Disposal Center on Scarboro Road in the northern portion of the County will handle all of the County's landfill needs for the next several decades. This facility, built to state-of-the-art standards, with liners and monitoring systems in place, was constructed in 1987 to take the place of the filled Tollgate landfill. In order to lessen the waste flow into the Scarboro facility, thereby extending its life span, the County established two significant programs: an extensive and highly successful recycling program and a waste to energy facility that burns municipal trash to produce energy.

SOLID WASTE FACILITIES POLICY 1 - Continue to provide environmentally sound solid waste disposal facilities by promoting waste reduction, recycling, and conservation of the natural environment while providing a quality living environment.

Implementation Strategies

1. Complete the update of the Solid Waste Management Plan in 2004.
2. Provide adequate solid waste disposal facilities in an environmentally sound manner.
3. Continue to expand recycling efforts and update the Recycling Plan.

SUMMARY

Solid waste management laws and regulations exist at Federal, State and County levels. Overall regulatory direction and standards for protecting human health and the environment are established at the Federal level. State regulations specify design criteria and the permitting, construction, operation, maintenance and monitoring of facilities. County regulations include issues of land use, zoning, procurement and financing related to solid waste management.

Harford County currently ranks first in the State of Maryland in its recycling efforts. A recycling rate in excess of 50 percent of the County's population greatly assists in reducing the flow of waste into the County's landfill. Since 1992 there has been a ban on disposing yard waste in the landfill or incinerator; therefore, lawn and garden trimmings are recycled and processed into compost and mulch. Over 25,000 tons are processed each year at the nine acre compost facility at the landfill site. This figure includes Christmas trees that are also processed. In addition to yard waste, the County offers its citizens opportunities to recycle household hazardous wastes and electronic equipment at various times throughout the year.

The Harford Waste to Energy Facility, located in Magnolia, processes most of the County's municipal solid waste. The Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority, under its revenue bond financing authority, developed this facility in 1988 for Harford County. It was previously in private ownership and was recently purchased by the County. On average, at least 115,000 tons of waste is burned each year to produce energy that is subsequently purchased by Aberdeen Proving Ground.

The County's Solid Waste Management Plan also addresses remediation and monitoring old landfill sites (both public and private) in order to protect public health and the environment. Old landfills were not built to the high environmental standards required by today's regulations.

The rubble fill needs of the County are currently being handled at the Oak Avenue Rubble Fill. Sufficient capacity exists to serve the County in the near term, however long term solutions will be the focus of the update to the Solid Waste Management Plan.

Recycling and solid waste management education are promoted throughout the County and ongoing environmental education is supported. Presentations are given to schools and organizations and tours are offered to the public at the Harford Waste Disposal Center and the Harford Waste to

Energy Facility. Recycling is part of the fourth grade curriculum for environmental education in all Harford County schools.

Implementation of the Solid Waste Management Plan is supported by this Plan. Coordination between the Departments of Public Works and Planning and Zoning must continue to ensure that the goals of both these plans are achieved in a manner that protects both the environment and the quality of life for County residents.

Public Education

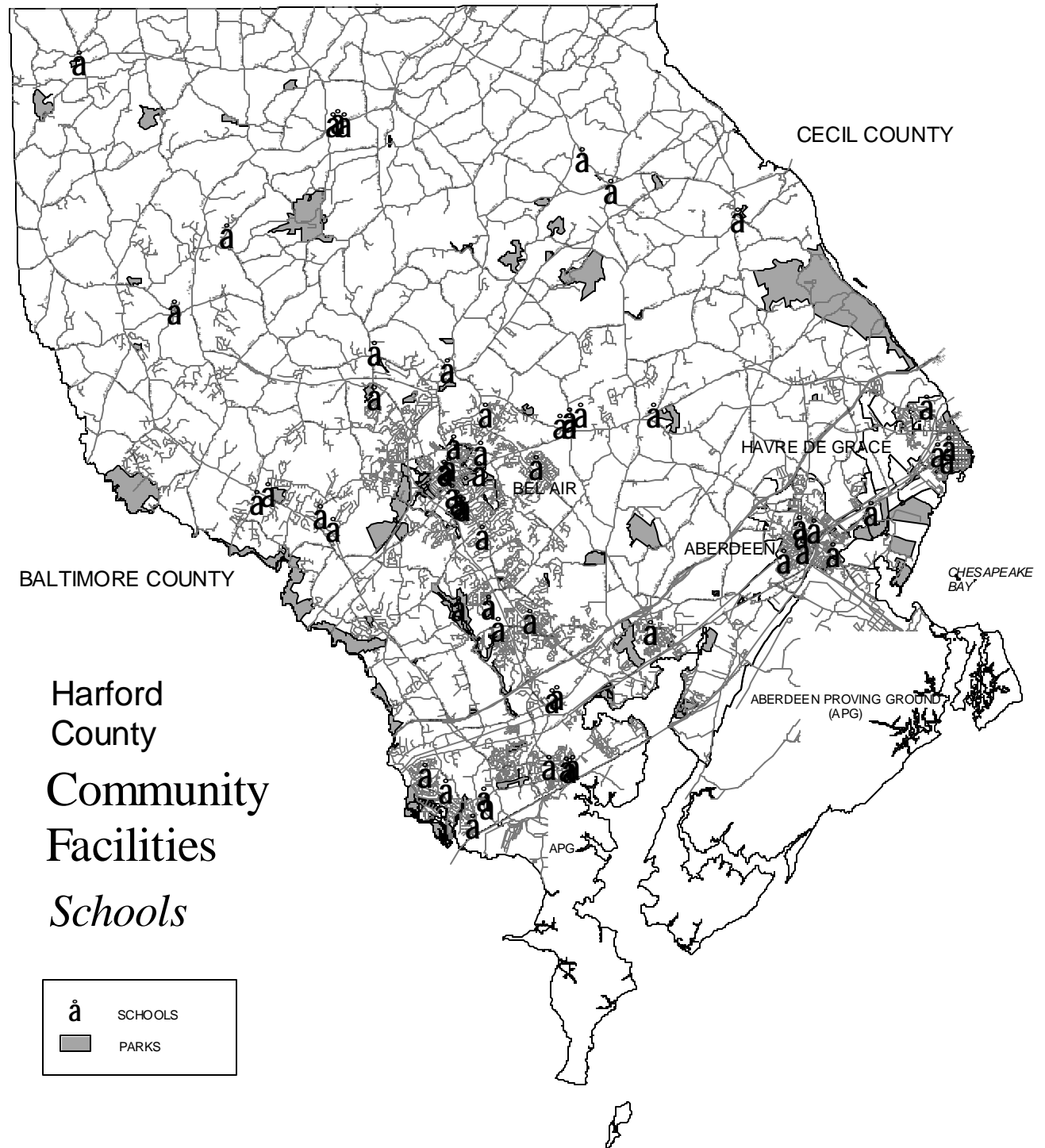
GOAL: To provide for the opportunity of a quality education for citizens of Harford County.

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) operates 32 elementary schools, eight middle schools, nine high schools (including Harford Vocational Technical School) and John Archer for disabled individuals (Figure 23). Having grown in excess of nineteen percent in the past ten years, Harford County has seen its student population increase by more than 7,000. The Harford County Public School system enrolls 40,264 students in 50 schools, employing more than 4,572 people.

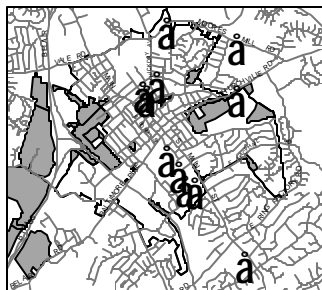
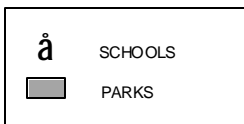
With more than 2,647 teachers, the HCPS has a ratio of 15.2 students per teacher and spends approximately \$6,515 a year on each student. The school system has prioritized the bulk of its funding into classroom and educator salaries. With an average starting salary of \$32,961, the HCPS ranks 13th out of 24 school systems. The system serves the entire County including the incorporated areas of the municipalities.

In addition, the State operates and regulates Harford Community College (HCC), which provides higher educational opportunities. HCC was founded in 1957 as a public community college. The college occupies a 331-acre site on Thomas Run Road, three miles east of Bel Air and has an enrollment of over 31,000 full-time and part-time students. HCC provides high quality, accessible and affordable educational opportunities and services including university transfer, career, developmental and continuing education programs. In addition, HCC is responsible for the Higher Education and Applied Technology (HEAT) Center. The HEAT Center, in Aberdeen, Maryland, is located at the juncture of Interstate 95 and MD Rt. 22, adjacent to the Park 'n Ride. HEAT provides expanded higher education access to the citizens of northeastern Maryland. Baccalaureate and graduate programs are offered by colleges and universities in support of the educational needs of the region. The HEAT Center includes the College of Notre Dame, The Johns Hopkins University, Towson University, University of Maryland College Park, and Villa Julie College.

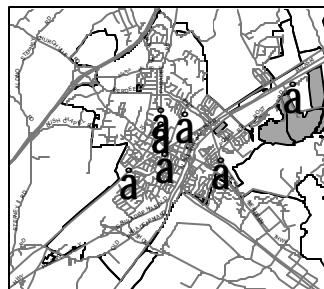
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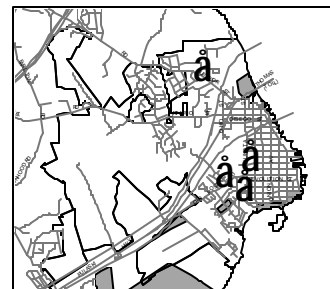
Harford
County
Community
Facilities
Schools



BEL AIR



ABERDEEN



HAVRE DE GRACE

Figure 23 □

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CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - School overcrowding and need for new facilities.

In order to maintain and project for the future needs of the County, the HCPS prepares an annual Master Facilities Plan. This document outlines the conditions of each school, utilization and its capital improvement priorities. It is the County's intent to provide facilities balanced with the level of planned growth. In order to meet this requirement, the Adequate Public Facilities provision of the Zoning Code establishes standards of adequacy for schools and identifies deficiencies. Figures 24 and 25 provide information on historic enrollment trends and projections for elementary, middle and high schools for the next seven years.

Over the past 12 years, Harford County has built five new elementary schools and one middle school, increasing capacity by 3,000 and 1,000 for elementary and middle schools, respectively. Several renovations and modifications have been built over this same time period including additions to Bel Air Middle School and Abingdon and Church Creek Elementary Schools. One of the continuing challenges in addressing school capacities is change to the curriculum, class sizes, and unfunded State and Federal mandates.

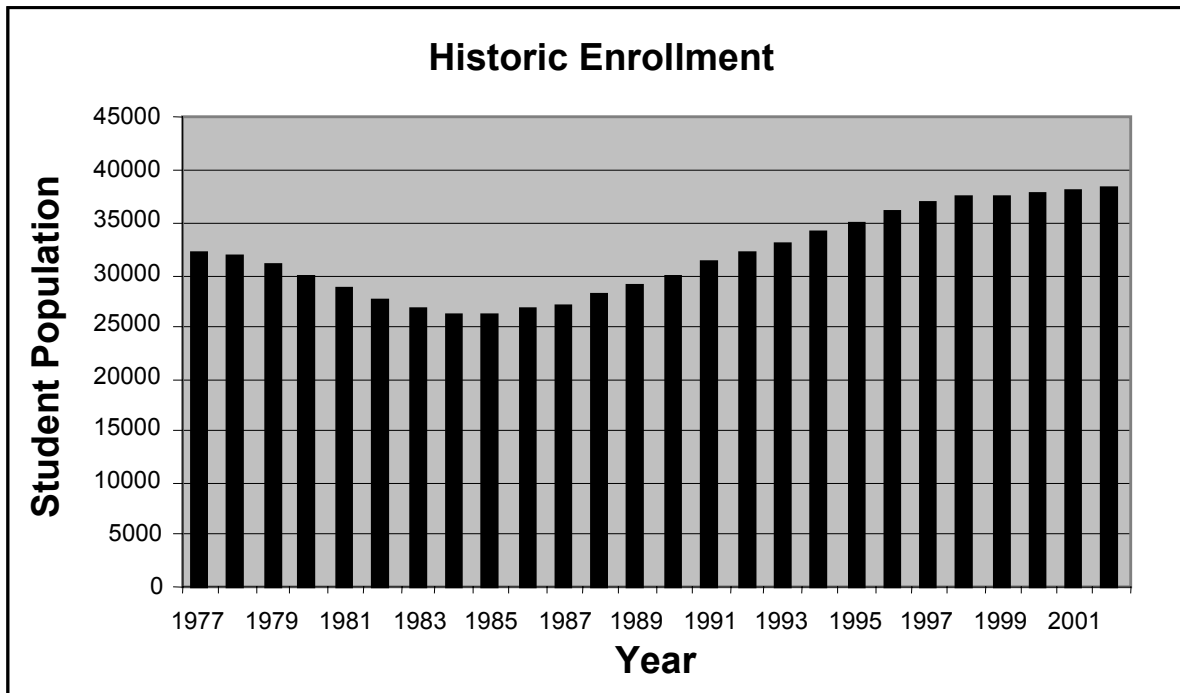


Figure 24

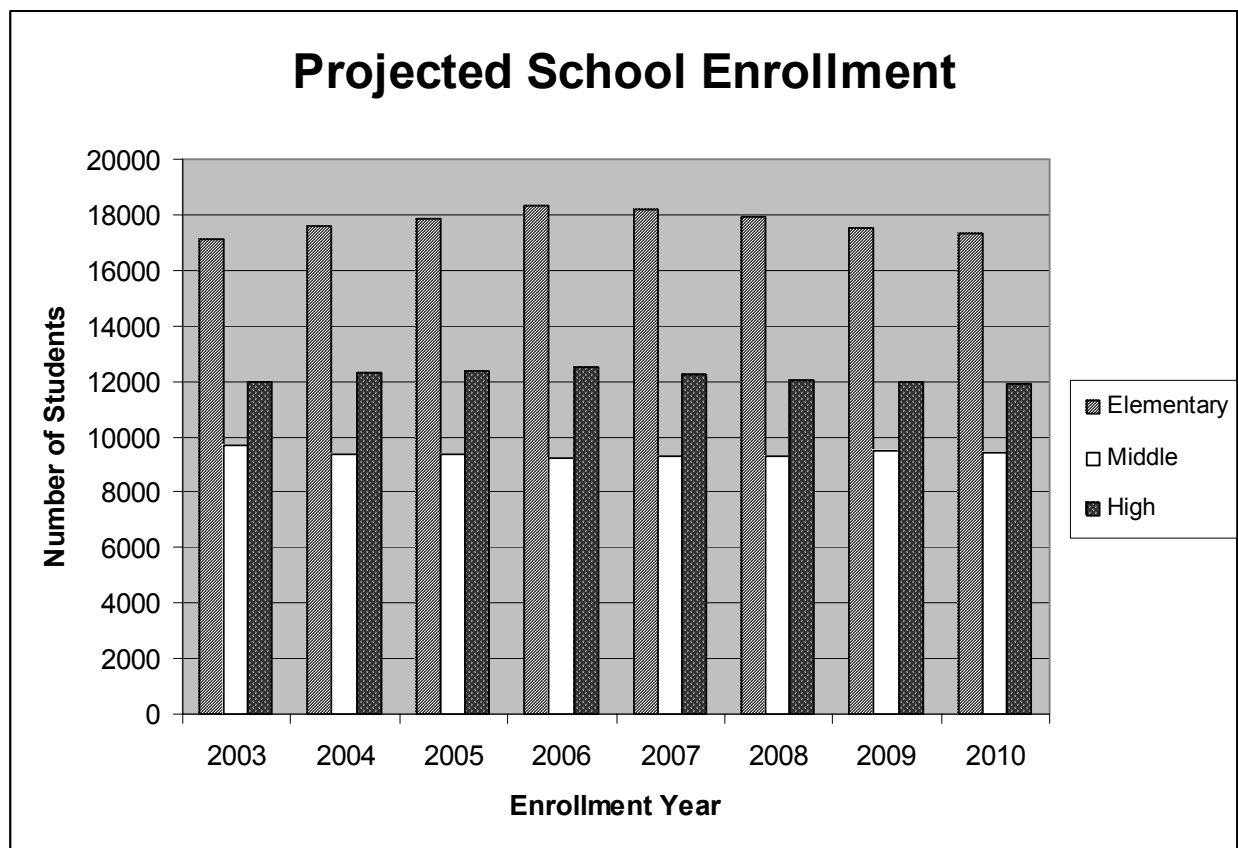


Figure 25

PUBLIC EDUCATION POLICY 1 - The County shall identify and strive to provide schools that meet the anticipated needs of the community.

Implementation Strategies

1. Construct a new middle/high school at the Patterson Mill Road complex.
2. Identify and prioritize major renovations, as well as future school sites, with the Harford County Public Schools system.
3. Review and enhance the Adequate Public Facilities regulations as needed.
4. Continue to review the potential for balancing enrollments and utilization of each facility.

CITIZEN ISSUE 2 - Impact fees.

Impact fees are charges assessed against new development that attempts to recover the cost incurred by a local government in providing the public facilities required to serve new development. As population increases, additional infrastructure is needed. Therefore, additional resources are needed to fund these capital improvements.

Harford County relies on the State for approximately 65% of the eligible construction costs for any capital project for public schools. In order to qualify for this annual competitive funding, the County must meet the State's standards. The County also uses recordation fees and a portion of the transfer tax as a funding source for capital projects in the public school system.

PUBLIC EDUCATION POLICY 2 - Create additional funding mechanisms to facilitate public school improvements to balance the impact of new development on public resources.

Implementation Strategies

1. Adopt legislation that provides a dedicated new funding mechanism for public school improvements.
2. Create a comprehensive and coordinated capital program with the County and the Board of Education which prioritizes capacity related capital improvements.

SUMMARY

School overcrowding has been identified as a problem in the County. Harford County computes school population projections under a State approved methodology. While school projections have been historically accurate, it is necessary to factor in the impacts that rapid changes in the housing market have on school population. This can be calculated by researching the number of students from a particular subdivision or development who are attending their "home" or designated school.

Harford County's Adequate Public Facilities (APF) legislation presently mandates that schools not exceed a capacity of 115%. When this capacity is reached, new preliminary plan approvals are postponed. The purpose of interrupting this approval is to allow school facilities to be expanded or improved to meet the demand. This is the subject of much debate as County schools use temporary buildings to provide classroom space for students.

The County has taken steps to address this problem. The APF task force has completed its work and legislative changes have been made. The Task Force will continue to review the APF regulations on a regular basis. A new secondary school is planned for the Patterson Mill site, two miles from the existing Bel Air High School. The new school is planned for completion in school year 2007-8.

Libraries

GOAL: Enhance residents' access to library resources.

In the 50 years since its founding, the Harford County Library system has expanded to include nine branches and an administration and support services building (Figure 27). In 2001, annual circulation of materials reached 2,469,446. Today, the Harford County Public Library serves over 160,000 registered borrowers. The system operates under a Board of Trustees that receives funding from a number of sources, with the County providing the largest amount of funding.

The services and materials that the library system offers are a variety of books, periodicals, audio and video materials, games and oral histories. The library also provides public meeting rooms, copy machines, audiovisual equipment, public access computers, catalogs with printers, and microfilm reader-printer. Programs for children and adults are offered, as are information services, reading development materials, an online community information directory, Internet access, health information, tax assistance, and volunteer opportunities.

The projected demands on the physical resources of the library system are dependent upon the increase in population by the area served. The library system strives to provide facilities within a five mile radius or 10 minute drive to utilize its services. While on-line resources can be instantly available anywhere in the system, the location of additional resources should be tailored to local needs. The projected number of residents to be served by its respective library branch is outlined in the table below (Figure 26).

Harford County Population Projections by Library Service Area

LIBRARY SERVICE AREA	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Aberdeen	24,824	22,973	26,872	30,319	32,876	34,363	35,638
Bel Air	63,259	92,924	99,118	109,226	116,467	121,199	124,803
Darlington	5,089	4,932	5,111	5,303	5,412	5,451	5,479
Edgewood	30,375	35,046	39,059	41,906	43,560	44,554	45,347
Fallston	21,510	21,648	21,641	22,482	22,970	23,154	23,290
Havre de Grace	12711	14840	15981	17048	17764	18175	18486
Joppatowne	11,143	11,391	11,543	11,936	12,156	12,224	12,269
Norrisville	7,180	7,920	8,104	8,558	8,851	9,005	9,120
Whiteford	6,041	6,916	7,286	7,809	8,164	8,374	8,533
TOTAL	182,132	218,590	234,715	254,585	268,220	276,500	282,965

Figure 26

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - More community facilities

The Harford County Library Strategic Plan has identified the need for more facilities to accommodate the increasing service demand. Although technological advances have reduced the demand for localizing resources, information tends to be more relevant in specific areas of the County. For example, farming information tends to be more relevant to people in the northern portion of the County while enterprise zone and neighborhood revitalization efforts would be more relevant to residents in the U.S. 40 corridor. Therefore a focused facilities plan is crucial to ensure that adequate library service is provided to all citizens.

In 2003, a new 12,000 square foot activity center opened in Norrisville, which included a 4,525 square foot library branch. The library has also opened a 35,000 square foot branch in Abindgon to serve nearly 76,000 residents. Updates to the Darlington branch will occur in 2004 and a new library branch in Jarrettsville is planned for 2005. To further alleviate pressure on the Bel Air branch, the Harford County Public Library is planning a future branch in Churchville.

LIBRARIES POLICY 1 - Provide appropriate library facilities to accommodate the needs of the community.

Implementation Strategies

1. Coordinate the strategic planning policies developed by the Library Board of Trustees with the County's land use planning policies.
2. Implement a capital improvement program for new facilities in Jarrettsville and Churchville.

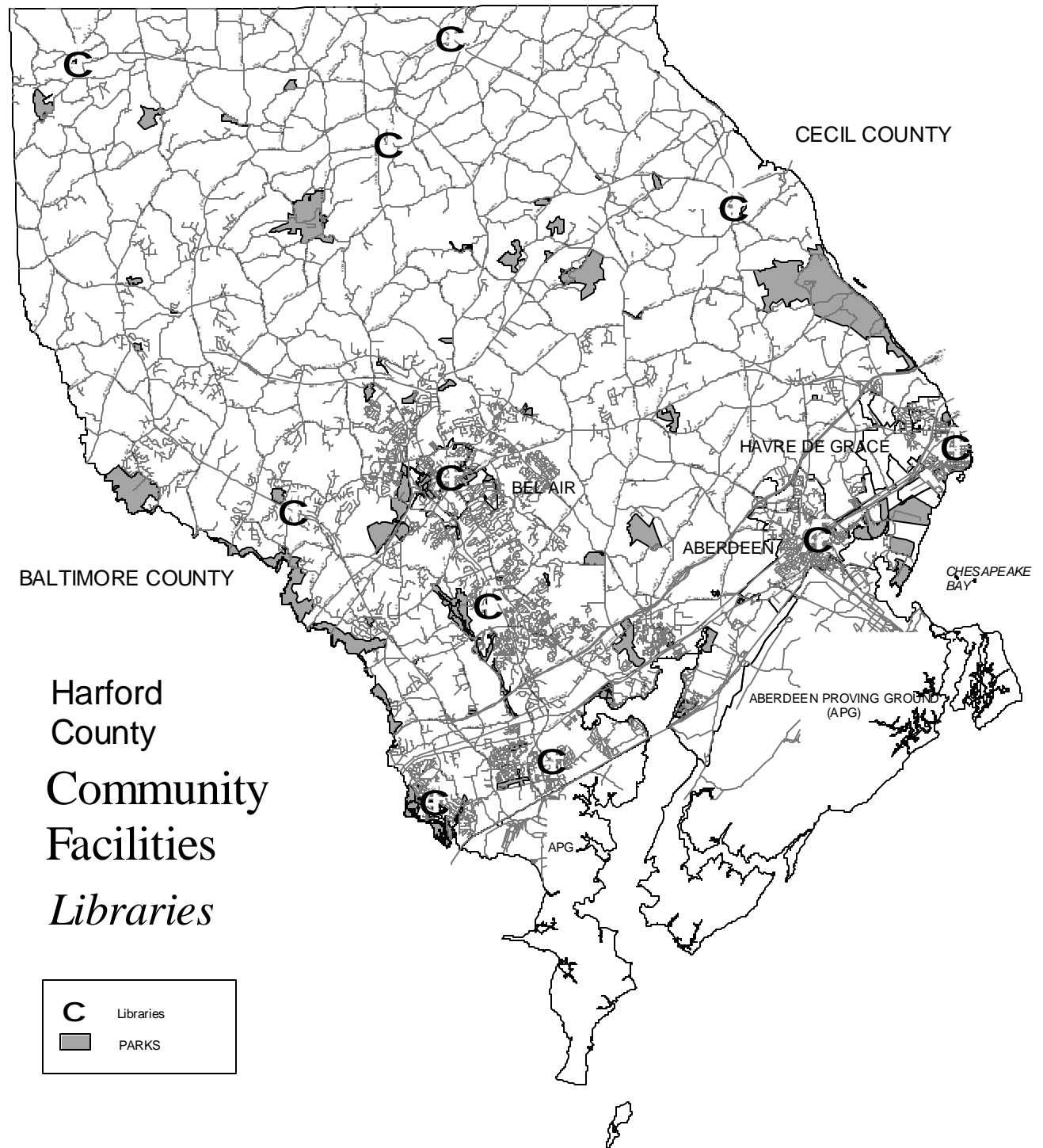
SUMMARY

Part of building sustainable communities is offering viable resources and facilities. Public libraries are an essential resource, supporting many community needs. In Harford County, libraries have become community destinations. In addition to services and materials, libraries provide many outreach programs to the community. Public libraries are serving as communal gathering places. Meeting rooms are heavily utilized for classes, events, and programs.

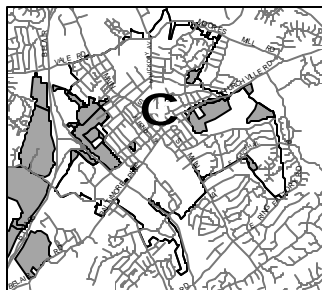
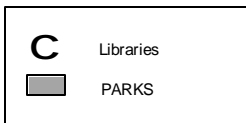
Over the years, libraries have become more of a cultural center through a variety of programs, events and services for families, organizations and businesses. Through advances in technology, libraries have also become information resource centers. Access to strong, efficient libraries is important in building viable communities. This plan stresses the need for coordinated planning strategies between the Harford County Public Library and Harford County Government. Ensuring the consistency between these two entities is important in providing adequate services for the County. As a vibrant community center, the library will, through collaboration, offer informational, educational, and cultural programs and services that meet the needs of all citizens of Harford County.

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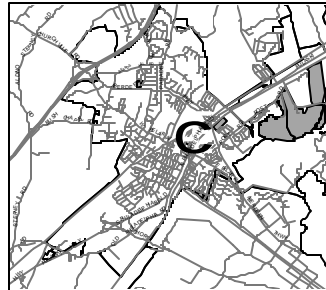
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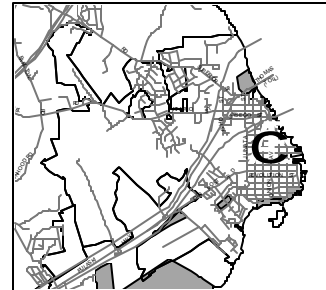
Harford
County
Community
Facilities
Libraries



BEL AIR



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Figure 27



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Parks and Open Space

GOAL: Preserve open space and natural lands for a range of recreational uses and environmental benefits.

Open space and natural lands are an important element of any populated area and contribute to its identity, livability, and viability. Open space can be in the form of State and County public parks, recreational and passive natural lands, as well as private recreational centers such as swim clubs and golf courses. As the population continues to grow, so do the recreation and open space needs of the citizens. The 1999 Harford County Land Preservation and Recreation Plan, an element of the County's Master Plan, addresses the amounts and types of land and facilities necessary to supply the needs of current and future residents of the County.

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - More community facilities.

The Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation acts as stewards for County-owned public lands. As development in and around the Designated Growth Areas increases, it will be necessary to acquire additional open space for public use. Adequate amounts of community open space must be located in and near neighborhoods for daily recreational activities. Trails and connecting greenways can provide important links between communities, schools, and other open space areas.

Park and open space lands are extensive in Harford County. Four State Parks are found in the County (Gunpowder Falls, Susquehanna, Rocks, and Palmer) providing over six thousand acres of public lands. All of the State-owned land is used for resource-based activities. The County will work with the State to ensure that adjoining land uses remain compatible with these public lands. Where appropriate, preservation initiatives will be pursued.

County-owned parkland managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation totals over 3,800 acres. Over 1,700 acres of public school land also provides recreational opportunities for communities. The County's park system ranges from small community parks to larger regional parks. Whereas community parks and school lands provide active recreation facilities, the County also has two parks, Eden Mill and Leight Park, that are devoted to nature studies and take advantage of the County's invaluable natural resources. This Plan supports continuation of these facilities and encourages that land uses adjacent to these sites minimize conflicts and provides pedestrian access where applicable.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE POLICY 1 - Evaluate and maximize the usage of present Parks and Recreation facilities, acquire additional lands and create an integrated park system.

Implementation Strategies

1. Develop facilities that serve a variety of purposes, creating opportunities for regional-based recreation.

2. Update Zoning Code regulations to enhance community open space requirements in new developments by requiring ample, usable open space within or safely and easily accessible to each neighborhood.
3. Coordinate the activities of the Departments of Parks and Recreation and Planning and Zoning to protect environmental and historic sites in Harford County.
4. Identify and coordinate trail connections between communities and new developments, where appropriate.
5. Update the 1999 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan.
6. Complete the right of way acquisition for the Ma & Pa hiking trail to achieve an unbroken trail from Forest Hill to Mount Soma, wherever possible.

CITIZEN ISSUE 2 - Active and Passive Greenways (more trails).

Active and passive greenways give residents the opportunity to enjoy and preserve the rural nature of the County. Active greenways provide recreation areas for hiking, biking and walking. Passive greenways refer to lands that are dedicated to providing natural linkages, such as wildlife corridors or “habitat highways” and connecting green spaces. These greenways allow for indigenous plants and animals to flourish. Greenways can preserve pieces of the landscape important to an area’s character, providing “green spaces” around neighborhoods and buffers between communities. Greenways also provide a venue for eco-tourism.

The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway is the most notable greenway in Harford County, having been certified by the State of Maryland as a Maryland Heritage Area. This greenway is a series of trails that connects cultural, historical and natural resources along both sides of the Susquehanna River from the Conowingo Dam to the head of the Bay. It is managed by a non-profit corporation. Not only are the trails land-based, but also water-based. Future plans are to connect the greenway to the Oakington peninsula, where the County has extensive park property and Bay-front access.

Two other integrated, publicly accessible greenways of note in the County are the Ma and Pa Heritage Corridor in Bel Air and vicinity, and the Winters Run Greenway below the Atkisson Dam. Both of these areas are located in the Development Envelope and provide a wealth of benefits to residents. The Ma and Pa Heritage Corridor is an excellent example of how the County and Towns may work together to provide linkages between municipally owned and County-owned facilities. Continuation of both these trails is supported by this Plan, and efforts to identify and acquire needed parcels or easements should be addressed as part of the development approval process.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE POLICY 2 - Increase active and passive greenways, extending and connecting existing public properties.

Implementation Strategies

1. Work with other agencies to develop new funding sources for the acquisition of properties to extend and connect existing trails systems and passive greenways.
2. Preserve undeveloped lands and natural areas to meet future needs as identified in the Harford County Land Preservation and Recreation Plan.
3. Update the Zoning Code to enhance standards for active and passive open space requirements.

SUMMARY

Preservation of open space and natural lands results in a variety of benefits that enhance the quality of life for the citizens of the County. It may provide both active and passive recreation opportunities. It may be used to preserve historical and environmental resources, as well as provide linkages between communities. In any community planning process, the provision of open space is usually cited as a primary desire of residents. To guide the County's efforts in meeting this desire, the County will be updating the Land Preservation and Recreation Plan in 2004. This Plan will inventory existing open space acreage and recreation facilities of the County, then analyze the needs of a growing population, and present strategies to meet those needs. Implementation of this plan will ensure that adequate and suitable land is designated for the full range of open space needs.

Community-based needs have also been met through dedicated open space requirements for new subdivisions. These private areas may be limited to the residents of a particular development and may be improved with facilities such as tennis courts, swimming pools, and tot lots. Adequate planning for open space within new developments is an essential element of a quality community. Efforts should be made during development design to provide such community gathering places. These open spaces in turn should be integrated with adjacent community areas to increase community interaction. All available opportunities to acquire open space land in and around the Development Envelope should be explored, with particular focus on larger parcels that could provide leisure opportunities on a more regional basis.

The Department of Parks and Recreation partners with an extensive network of volunteer-based Recreation Councils to meet the recreation needs of the community. These Councils help determine the best and most appropriate use of Parks and Recreation property, and then utilize their volunteers to program activities, provide support staff, and raise funds for capital improvements. The County's Land Preservation and Recreation Plan addresses the needed recreation facilities in each Recreation Council district.

In order to meet the recreation and open space needs of Harford County citizens, as identified in the County's Land Preservation and Recreation Plan, new and innovative approaches must be explored. All levels of government (Federal, State, County and municipal) should work together to coordinate and integrate land acquisition and provision of programs. Partnerships between both public and private entities should also be developed. Current zoning regulations may need revisions in order to more readily facilitate public-private partnerships that could utilize County-owned land. The use of short to mid-term leases or joint ventures, rather than outright acquisitions and development, can

also be used to expand the County's ability to meet recreation and open space needs. Government facilities must be built using an integrated planning approach to serve multiple needs. Schools and recreation centers should be designed and built to serve as community centers. The William N. McFaul Activities Center is a prime example of this type of collaboration. These strategies, as well as others, must be developed in order for the County to be able to provide for the open space and recreation needs of its citizens.

Sheriff, Fire and Emergency Operations

GOAL: Ensure public safety by providing adequate police, fire, rescue and EMS services for Harford County citizens and businesses.

Reliable and competent emergency operations and response is essential for providing citizens with an outstanding quality of life. In Harford County, these services are provided by a Sheriff's Office, Volunteer Fire Department and the County's Emergency Operations Center. In addition to these efforts, Harford County is supported by the Maryland State Police, which maintains a barrack in Benson, and police departments operated in each of the municipalities. The Harford County Sheriff's Office has 227 uniformed deputies, the State Police (Benson Barrack) has 55 sworn personnel, and Aberdeen, Bel Air and Havre de Grace have 37, 31 and 28 sworn officers, respectively. The County Sheriff's Office and the three municipal police departments have also established a mutual aid agreement for emergency responses.

The Harford County Sheriff's Office is dedicated to protecting the rights of all citizens and strives to preserve peace while providing a safe environment for all citizens. In 2002, the Harford County Sheriff's Office responded to over 144,000 calls. The Sheriff's Office categorizes statistics and crime analysis into different sectors within the County. The Sectors and number of calls are defined in the table below (Figure 28).

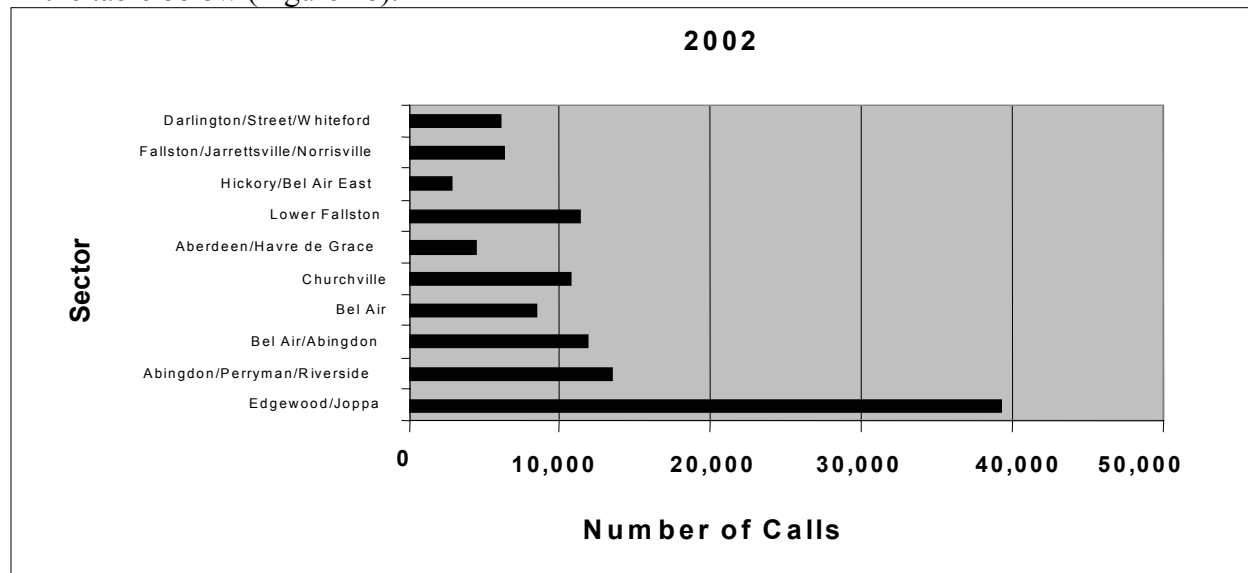


Figure 28

Fire and Emergency Medical Services are provided on a predominately volunteer basis. There are over 1,300 volunteers who assist in over 8,300 fire and 20,328 emergency medical service responses everyday in Harford County. The County is categorized into 11 companies with 16 substations that support the various companies (Figure 31). Outlined in the Figures 29 and 30 are the number of calls each company responded to over the past two years.

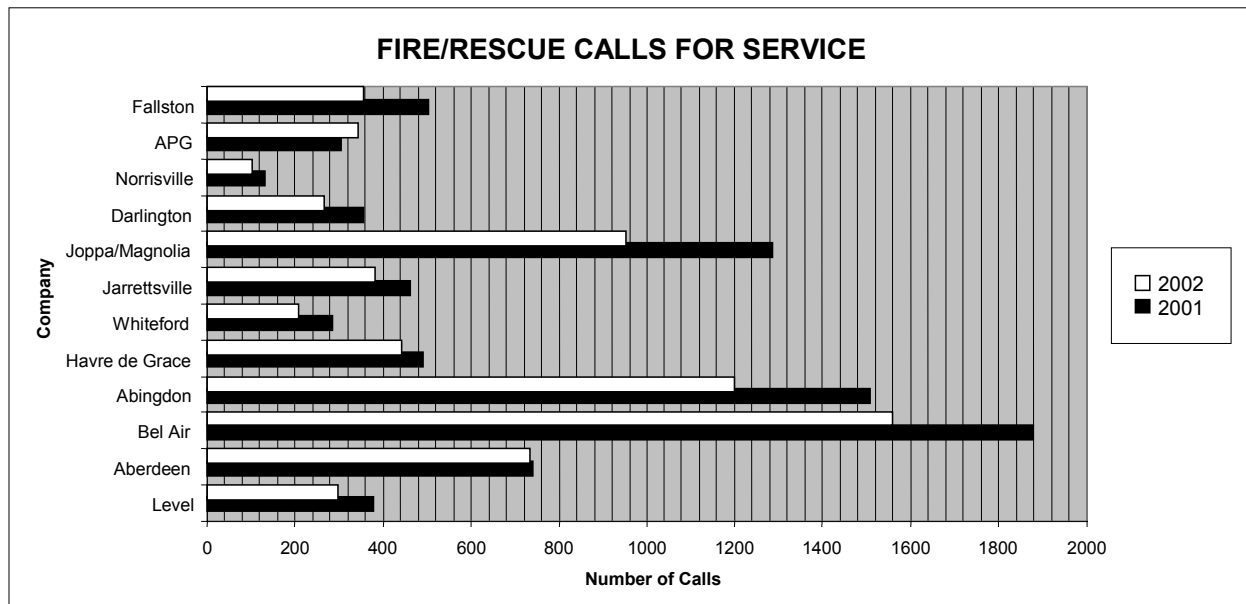


Figure 29

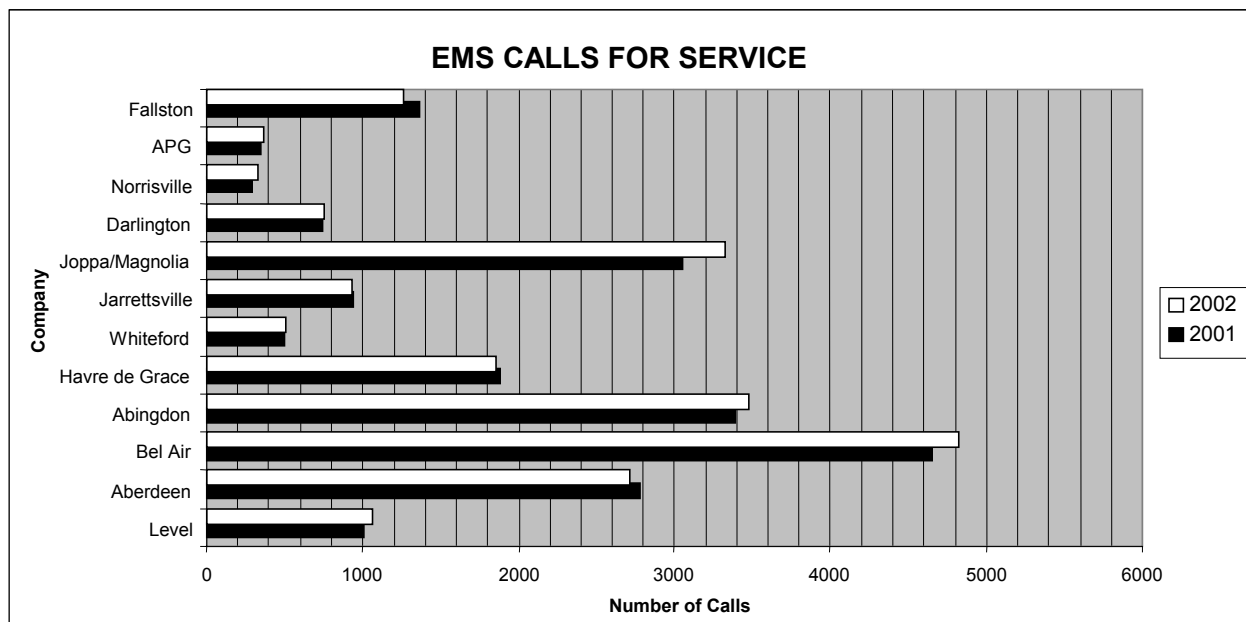


Figure 30

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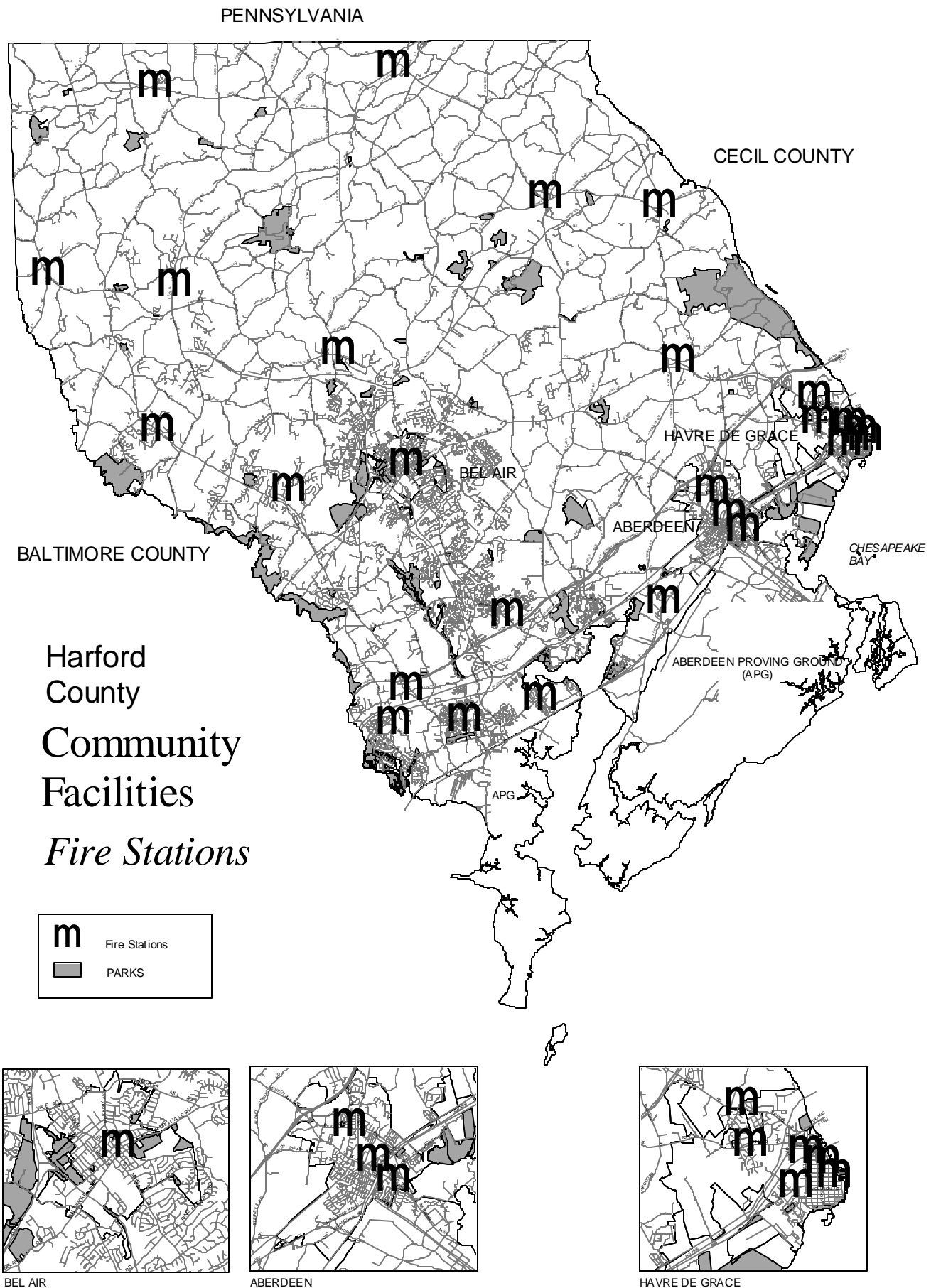


Figure 31 □

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Mutual aid is given between companies within the County and neighboring jurisdictions in Baltimore County, Cecil County and Pennsylvania. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is the crisis management hub for the County. The EOC is responsible for preparing an Emergency Management Plan for the citizens of Harford County in the event of disasters or emergency situations. It includes a general plan of operations along with specific plans for APG Chemical Stockpile and Radiological Emergency Response for Peach Bottom Nuclear Power Plant. In addition, plans for terrorism, HAZMAT emergencies, hurricanes, tornados, dam and flood emergencies, severe weather, and earthquakes are included.

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - Provide Community Policing substations within designated areas.

Community Policing consists of eight members who are responsible for assisting communities in identifying and addressing problems and concerns that are unique to that community. The unit also provides community based support in the form of Neighborhood Watch Programs, DARE instruction, and Crime Prevention Programs. The Sheriff's Office operates three community-based substations, each of which was donated by various businesses or organizations that support the efforts of the Harford County Sheriff's Office. Substations are located in Darlington at the Wilson Center, in Joppatowne, and in Street at the Old Highland Elementary School.

Harford County is committed to ensuring a peaceful and safe environment for all citizens. The provision of safety and security measures are essential for strong, stable communities. The Harford County Sheriff's Office currently operates out of Bel Air, with a northern precinct in Jarrettsville and a southern precinct in Edgewood. In addition to these efforts, the municipalities of Havre de Grace, Aberdeen and Bel Air operate their own police departments for their respective incorporated areas.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS POLICY 1 - Ensure public safety within established communities.

Implementation Strategies

1. Continue to support the Community Policing Unit and proactively pursue more community participation.
2. Continue to encourage and promote Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles with the update of the Zoning Code.
3. Continue to support the Sheriff's Office Strategic Plan.
4. Maintain the existing sworn officer ratio per 1,000 population.

CITIZEN ISSUE 2 – Provide prompt response to all emergencies.

The response time necessary for personnel to react to an emergency is very critical. Therefore, it is necessary to maintain and locate facilities in appropriate locations within communities. This is imperative for timely and orderly responses to any emergency situation.

The EOC is responsible for emergency planning to assure the availability of assistance and proper resources after natural and manmade disasters. Emergency preparedness in Harford County is a continuous process, which involves all of us. There are varieties of hazards that we face everyday and an extremely dedicated group of people plan for, and respond to, these hazards.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS POLICY 2 - Reduce the loss of property, loss of life or injury due to fire or need for emergency medical care.

Implementation Strategies

1. Provide for new facilities in a manner consistent with planned growth in order to maintain an acceptable response time to emergencies.
2. Coordinate a comprehensive Capital Improvement Program that provides necessary equipment updates.
3. Coordinate with emergency medical service providers to evaluate the needs of the volunteer service providers to better meet the citizens' needs and determine what changes, if any, are necessary to provide sufficient emergency medical services for the County's growing population.

CITIZEN ISSUE 3 - Planning for Emergency Operations.

Emergency planning is important to ensuring the availability of assistance and proper resources after natural and manmade disasters. Harford County is vulnerable to the effects of a number of natural emergencies such as hurricanes and severe winter storms. In addition, the County is also susceptible to a variety of man-made hazards such as fires, hazardous materials incidents at APG and incidents at the Peach Bottom Nuclear Power Plant in Pennsylvania. Harford County is also committed to providing safety and security for its citizens due to the recent threats to national security. Coordination with municipal and State authorities, as well as the Red Cross is essential for the well being of citizens of Harford County. The ability of the County to respond to threats of terrorism and other man-made or natural disasters is enhanced by offering citizens vigilant and proactive measures.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS POLICY 3 - Promote public safety education and coordinate Homeland Security efforts with the State and local governments.

Implementation Strategies

1. Coordinate and ensure zoning regulations and other County plans are consistent with emergency operation programs and practices.

2. Continue to coordinate changes to the Zoning Code to address accessibility for emergency response equipment.
3. Continue to support education and community awareness programs.

SUMMARY

It is important to provide outstanding Emergency Operations in order to maximize the quality of life in Harford County. Coordinating efforts among an array of agencies is important. The EOC coordinates with local, State and Federal agencies in any emergency event.

To adequately serve the County's population, an expansion and/or renovation of the Sheriff's Office complex in Bel Air is scheduled along with an expansion of the Detention Center. Community outreach will be continued through community and school policing units.

Outreach and education is also an important aspect of the Harford County volunteer fire, rescue and EMS companies. Collaboration among the 11 volunteer fire, rescue and EMS companies, as well as improvements to existing communication systems, is necessary to ensure prompt responses to emergency calls and to provide overall successful emergency operations.

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PRESERVATION

GOAL: Protect and preserve the County's agricultural heritage and the continued viability of agriculture.

Harford County's heritage has been an important component of the County's land use strategies for years. This heritage is based not only on historic sites, structures, and landscapes, but also on a strong agricultural economy that contributes to the economic health and vitality of the County. The County has recognized the importance of preserving its heritage by adopting plans and policies that are designed to manage growth, preserve farmland and historic resources, and protect the character of rural and urban communities. Complementing the Land Use Element Plan is the Historic Preservation Element Plan, prepared by the County in 1998 and updated in 2001. This Plan addresses in more detail the protection of the County's historic resources.

The County has made a strong commitment to preservation of rural areas and the history that abounds throughout the County. Continuing this effort will require the development of new approaches that will enable present and future citizens an opportunity to enjoy the accomplishments of the past. Legislative, financial, and educational initiatives will have to be enacted to achieve the policies and improvements called for in this Plan. This section of the Land Use Element Plan lays out the program for both the Rural Element Plan and the Historic Preservation Element Plan.

Rural Area

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - More emphasis on agricultural preservation - Purchase of Development Rights Program.

Census data indicates that the County has lost 91,627 acres of farmland since 1950 (Figure 32). This equates to a rate of farmland loss of approximately 1,900 acres annually. This rate of loss has improved in recent years as a result of the County's decision in 1977 to participate in the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation program, and the decision in 1993 to develop a County Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program.

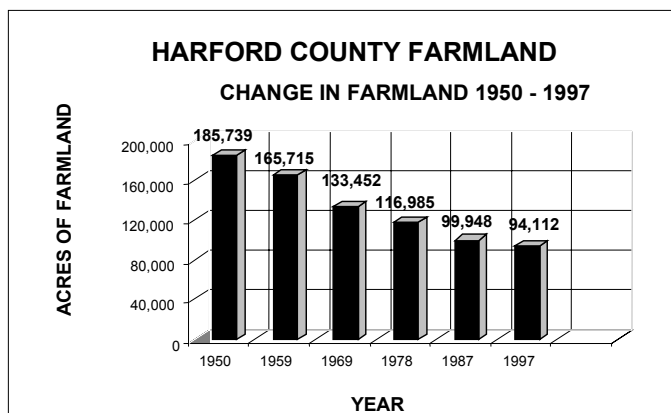


Figure 32

*Source: US Agricultural Census 1997

Since 1977 over 12,000 acres have been preserved through the State's MALPF program. As of June 2003, Harford County's PDR program has preserved over 19,000 acres. Combined with other land preservation efforts over 35,000 acres have been protected in Harford County (Figure 33).

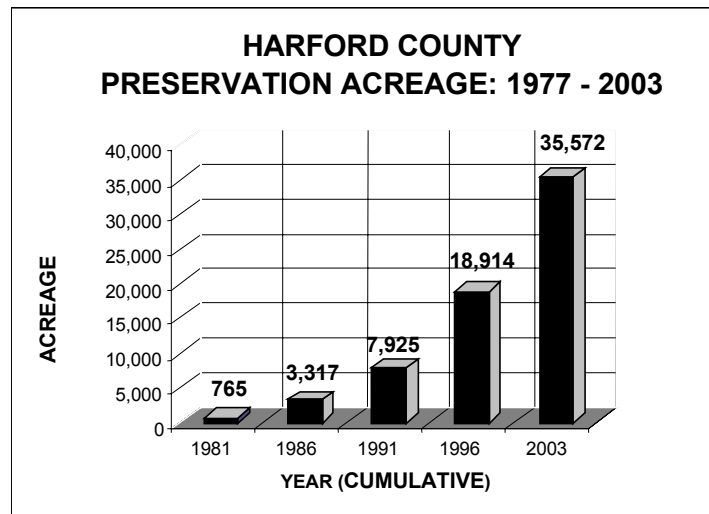


Figure 33

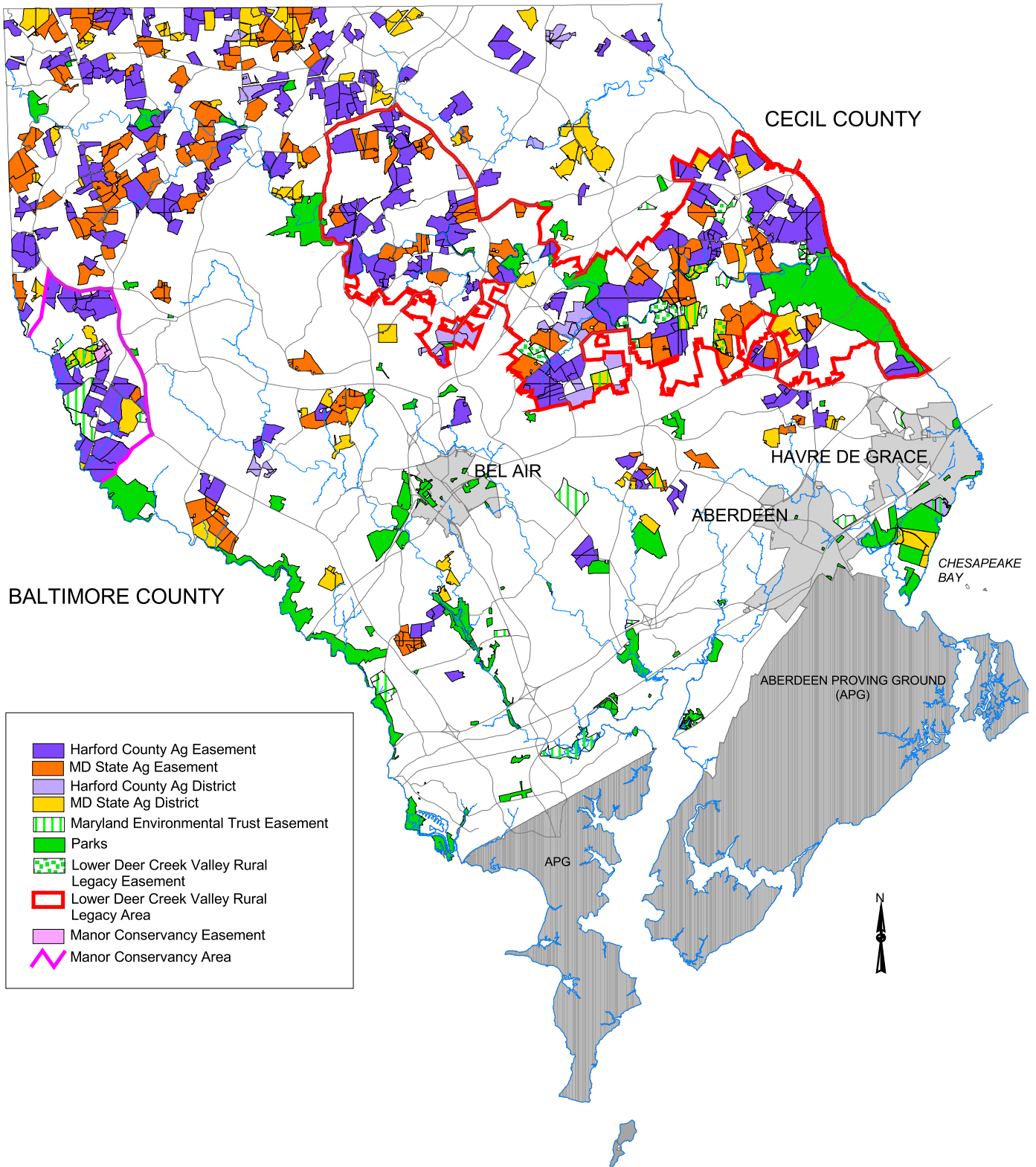
In Harford County, landowners can preserve their land through a variety of local, State, and private programs including the Harford County Agricultural Land Preservation Program, the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, Rural Legacy, Green Print, Forest Legacy or Trusts such as the Maryland Environmental Trust, Maryland Historical Trust or the Harford Land Trust (Figures 34 and 35).

Preservation Program	Acreage In Preservation Programs
Harford County Agricultural Preservation Program	19,460
Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation Easements	12,400
Lower Deer Creek Valley Rural Legacy Area	1,175
Manor Conservancy Rural Legacy Area	94
Maryland Environmental Trust	2,438
Maryland Historic Trust	120
*TOTAL	35,572

Figure 34

*As of June 2003

PENNSYLVANIA



AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION MAP

HARFORD COUNTY, MARYLAND

Figure 35

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RURAL POLICY 1 - Improve agricultural preservation programs so they remain a viable option for landowners.

Implementation Strategies

1. Enhance the funding mechanisms used to support the County's Purchase of Development Rights Program.
2. Review the per acre price paid for easements annually to ensure that the pricing encourages participation in these programs.
3. Ensure that preservation programs are implemented in a timely manner.
4. Focus preservation efforts in areas that will expand existing preserved areas.
5. Increase the amount of land preserved to 55,000 acres by 2012.

CITIZEN ISSUE 2 - Transfer of Development Rights Reform.

Harford County began addressing the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) issue in 1982 when the Zoning Code introduced the concept. The topic was readdressed in the 1992 Rural Element Plan and then again by a TDR Task Force in 1996. Subsequently, the County continued to analyze the options for a TDR program, and these findings combined with the strong message from the community to retain the Development Envelope and Rural Villages with minimal modifications has limited the future options for a TDR program. In the interim, the County continues to use the TDR provision in the Zoning Code that allows for the transfer of development rights between properties under specific conditions. Amended in 2003, the provision allows for the transfer of development rights between agriculturally zoned properties that are within one-half mile of the sending property. Receiving properties can only increase their development rights by 50%.

RURAL POLICY 2 - Maintain and enhance the County's existing agricultural to agricultural TDR program.

Implementation Strategies

1. Review and consider the revision of the Transfer of Development Rights provisions as part of the comprehensive update of the Zoning Code.
2. Require that a preservation easement be placed on part or all of the sending property.
3. As part of the update of the Zoning Code appropriate development standards for the receiving area shall be considered.

CITIZEN ISSUE 3 - AG zoning – density and uses.

The purpose of the agricultural district is to provide for the continued viability of farming and agricultural uses, the conservation of agricultural land, and to maintain and promote the rural character of this land. Agriculture is one of the largest industries in Harford County, generating stable employment for more than 3,000 people. Using Department of Natural Resources and Maryland Department of Agriculture statistics and reports from individuals and companies, an evaluation of the industry was conducted as part of the County's Agricultural Development Initiative to determine its economic impact. This evaluation indicates an annual impact of approximately \$400 million within Harford County.

Harford's agricultural industry includes traditional and nontraditional farming. Livestock and milk are major income producers. Harford County ranks second in the State in terms of cattle sold and third in terms of horses. The area ranks sixth in terms of dairy production. Cash grain acreage - both corn and soybeans have increased in importance as have hay and straw production (Figure 36). Fruit and vegetable production has increased because of market demand in the County and nearby regions. Specialty products such as flowers, hanging baskets, wine, honey, and Christmas trees have become a staple of Harford County's agriculture markets. Value-added enterprises and infrastructure businesses make up the remainder of Harford County's agricultural industry.

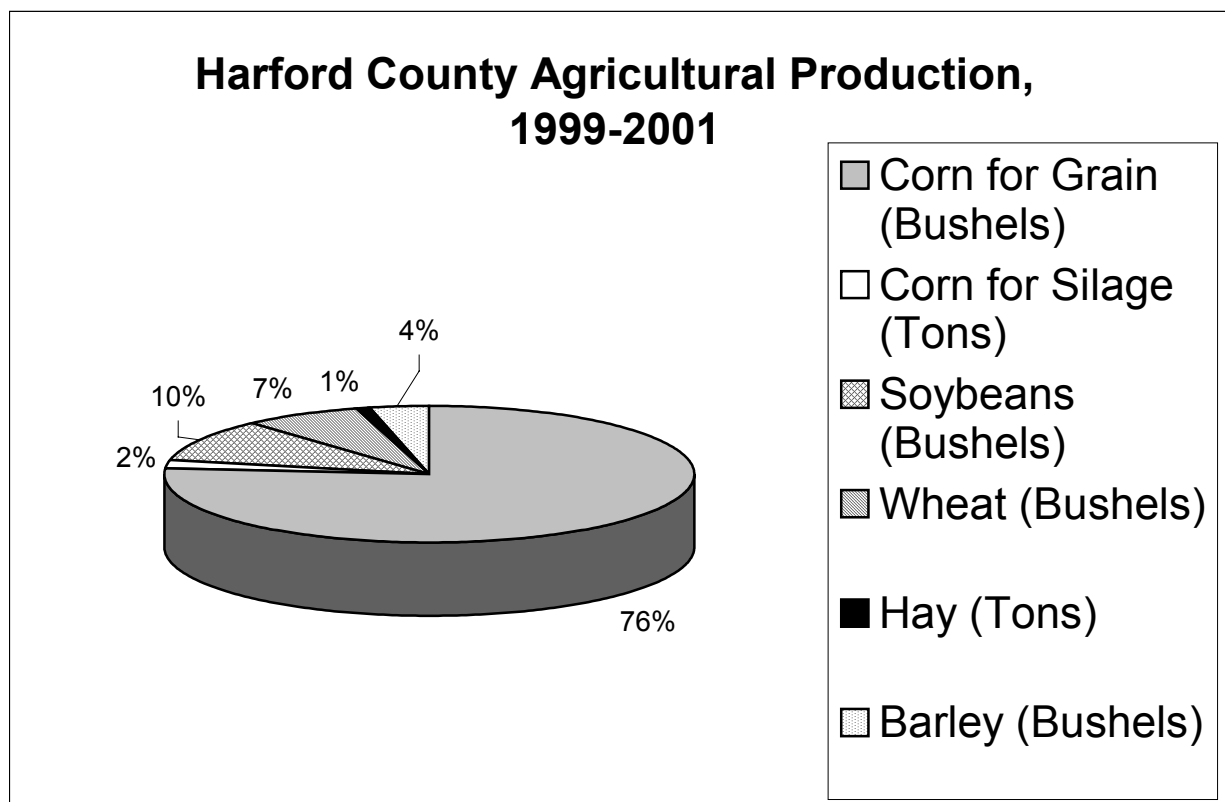


Figure 36

Co-existing with these agricultural enterprises is a growing number of residential uses. Data shows that since 1995, an average of slightly over 300 residential permits per year have been issued in the rural areas. Residential development in the rural area of the County is guided by agricultural zoning that allows for the development of one dwelling unit per 10 acres. The Code also provides for the use of family conveyances.

RURAL POLICY 3 - Ensure that the agricultural district classification supports the agricultural industry.

Implementation Strategies

1. Recognize agriculture, and agricultural support services, as the primary economic base in the rural areas of the County by continuing to support the implementation of the County's Agricultural Economic Development Initiative.
2. Revise the agricultural district regulations to ensure that they support the continuation and expansion of agriculture as a viable industry.
3. Streamline the permitting process for commercial agricultural uses and value added products at all levels of local government.

CITIZEN ISSUE 4 - Increase the use of buffers between agricultural and residential uses.

As more development occurs in the rural areas of the County, the potential for conflicts between agriculture and residential uses increase. Residents moving into agricultural areas need to be aware that farming is an industry, and that situations and conditions can occur that may disrupt their lifestyle. While the establishment of buffers will help to minimize some of the conflicts that occur because of the juxtaposition of uses, other land use measures should also be considered. Current regulations allow private wellheads to go within ten feet of the property line. This could impact adjoining agricultural operations because certain farming practices are not allowed within 100 feet of wellheads.

RURAL POLICY 4 - Promote land use patterns that support the continuation of agriculture.

Implementation Strategies

1. Propose a right to farm statement that would be required at the time of settlement and upon issuance of building permits to inform prospective buyers that the adjoining agriculturally zoned land may be subject to activities that may result in noise, dirt, odors, and movement of farm equipment.
2. Update the Zoning Code to require buffers on all properties being developed that adjoin agriculturally zoned lands.

3. Implement land use policies and regulations that help maintain a critical mass of agricultural land to support the County's agricultural industry.
4. As part of the Zoning Code update, review and consider revising the Conservation Development Standards (CDS).
5. Establish a minimum preservation acreage for new residential developments outside of Designated Growth Areas.
6. Evaluate road design standards to help ensure that that they match the needs of the agricultural industry.

SUMMARY

To retain Harford County's rural character, agriculture must be recognized and supported as an economically viable vocation. Achieving this will require the preservation of critical masses of land so that future generations can continue to farm. Supporting these concepts, it is the intent of this Plan not to decrease a landowner's equity, but rather to support the utilization of these rights in a manner that complements the surrounding agricultural community and promotes the protection of rural character.

While preservation efforts in the County have been successful in slowing the loss of farmland and in helping to provide financial security for farming families, increasing participation in the program is still of paramount importance. To achieve this, increasing the amount of funding available to the County's PDR program should be a priority. This can be accomplished through a variety of funding mechanisms, and specific steps should be taken to identify the measures that would provide the greatest benefit to the program. This additional funding will improve the program by making it possible to increase the number of farms brought into the program each year, and it will enable the County to increase the price per acre offered land owners.

Preservation efforts should continue to be directed toward the acquisition of easements on properties that build on existing blocks of preserved land. Additional steps should be taken to establish a preservation "belt" that clearly marks the transition from the Development Envelope to the rural portions of the County. The Rural Legacy program already promotes this concept as evidenced by the designation of the Lower Deer Creek Valley Rural Legacy Area and the Manor Rural Legacy Area.

The County recognizes that planning for the rural area must also take into account that some residential development will continue to occur. In order to minimize the impact of this development on both agriculture and public facilities, this Plan recommends that to the degree possible, new development be directed to the Rural Villages and Rural Residential areas, and that the boundaries of these areas not be expanded. To further minimize the impact of residential development in the rural area the County will consider, as part of the Zoning Code update, clustering provisions for residential development on agriculturally zoned lands.

An inventory of the development potential of land in the rural area of the County was completed in June 2003. The study indicated that there is the potential for approximately 12,636 additional units in this area. When past development patterns in the rural area are compared to the residential capacity available, it is clear that there is a sufficient inventory of potential residential units to meet future needs, and that there is no immediate need for any additional rezoning of agricultural lands for residential use. However, any requests for rezoning will be carefully reviewed as to location and the ability of public facilities to support the proposed use.

Studies also indicate that the County has a sufficient inventory of commercially zoned lands to meet its immediate and foreseeable retail and service needs. No additional commercial rezonings will be supported unless, upon further review, it is determined that proposed changes would serve the needs of the community in a particular location. All additional zoning changes will be subject to a technical analysis to help ensure that the proposed change will not generate adverse impact in the community.

In the rural area of the County, adequate support services should be readily available to the farming community. Rural villages should serve as the central locations for these commercial activities. Services, needed by the rural community, should be encouraged to stay or relocate in the villages. The zoning classifications and development regulations associated with the village designations will be reviewed and updated. This will help to ensure that existing and new services in these communities can be maintained or developed in a manner that supports the character of the rural village. Village Design Guidelines will also be developed to help support the retention of the area's character.

Another frequently suggested tool for addressing both the preservation of agricultural land and controlling growth within Harford County is the use of transfer of development rights (TDR). While this Plan recognizes the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program as the most effective measure to date for protecting the rural area, it also recognizes the importance of a TDR program. The County's TDR provision will be reevaluated and amended as part of the comprehensive Zoning Code update to improve its effectiveness. The program should continue to provide for the transfer of development rights between agriculturally zoned properties. Additional preservation measures should be required of both the sending and receiving properties to help maintain the viability of agricultural operations.

The protection of farmland, however, is just one component of the program that must be implemented to support both the agricultural community and the rural character of the County. A successful rural program must also provide farmers with opportunities to engage in "state of the art" farming practices to enhance their industry. Likewise, it must support changing market demands as farming coexists with the County's growing population. Value-added enterprises are growing in number and must also be recognized and supported as a valuable component of the County's agricultural base.

The 1997 Agricultural Economic Development Initiative established specific actions and programs to support these efforts. These actions were reviewed and reprioritized as part of the AG 2000 Initiative. This program should be reevaluated on a regular basis to help guide the County's agricultural economic program.

Another important component of keeping a viable agricultural economy is minimizing the conflicts that can occur when residential development intermixes with agricultural activities. This Plan recognizes the need to review the Zoning Code and expand the protection offered farmers. As part of the comprehensive update of the Code, specific right to farm provisions will be addressed. Additionally, the list of alternative uses that support agricultural economic initiatives should be reviewed and modified to support current market demands.

To further protect future farming operations, it is recommended that adequate buffers be established on properties being developed for residential purposes. Careful consideration must be given to providing these buffers in a manner that supports the clustering of lots while still providing adequate separation between the uses. These buffers must be maintained by the property owner(s) and must be subject to an easement to ensure their protection.

As part of the Zoning Code update, the County will review and consider revision of the Conservation Development Standards. This Plan recommends that Conservation Development Standards or some form of clustering be explored for all new residential developments in the rural area. It is recommended that new development maximize the amount of land available as active farmland, open space, or buffers. A specific limit on the percentage of the property that can be developed should also be considered. Areas not included in the specified building envelope should be subject to an easement.

According to State data, previously created lots in the agricultural district average about three acres in size, which results in valuable agricultural lands being unnecessarily lost to development. In addition to preserving land, implementation of clustering can reduce the visual impacts of a development on the rural landscape. It can also reduce the amount of clearing, grading, and road construction required thereby providing environmental and economic advantages.

Transportation accessibility plays an integral role in the vitality of rural communities. Farming communities are becoming increasingly more dependent on suitable transportation, as well as adequate roads and bridges to meet their logistical needs. Although mobility and accessibility in rural areas is imperative to the well being of these communities, preservation of scenic features and rural roads are still a priority supported by this Plan.

Historic Preservation

GOAL: Protect and preserve the County's historic heritage.

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - Improve preservation of historic resources

Harford County has a strong record of recognizing the importance of its historic resources. Nearly 2,000 historically significant sites have been inventoried and the information filed with the Maryland Historical Trust. Of these, 24 have also been designated as Harford County Landmarks. There are more than 70 individual sites and districts in Harford County listed in the National Register, and community members in the village area of Whiteford/Cardiff are interested in having this area designated a National Register District (Figure 37). Harford County contains one National Historic Landmark – Sion Hill, and is also home to a Certified Maryland Heritage Area - the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway.

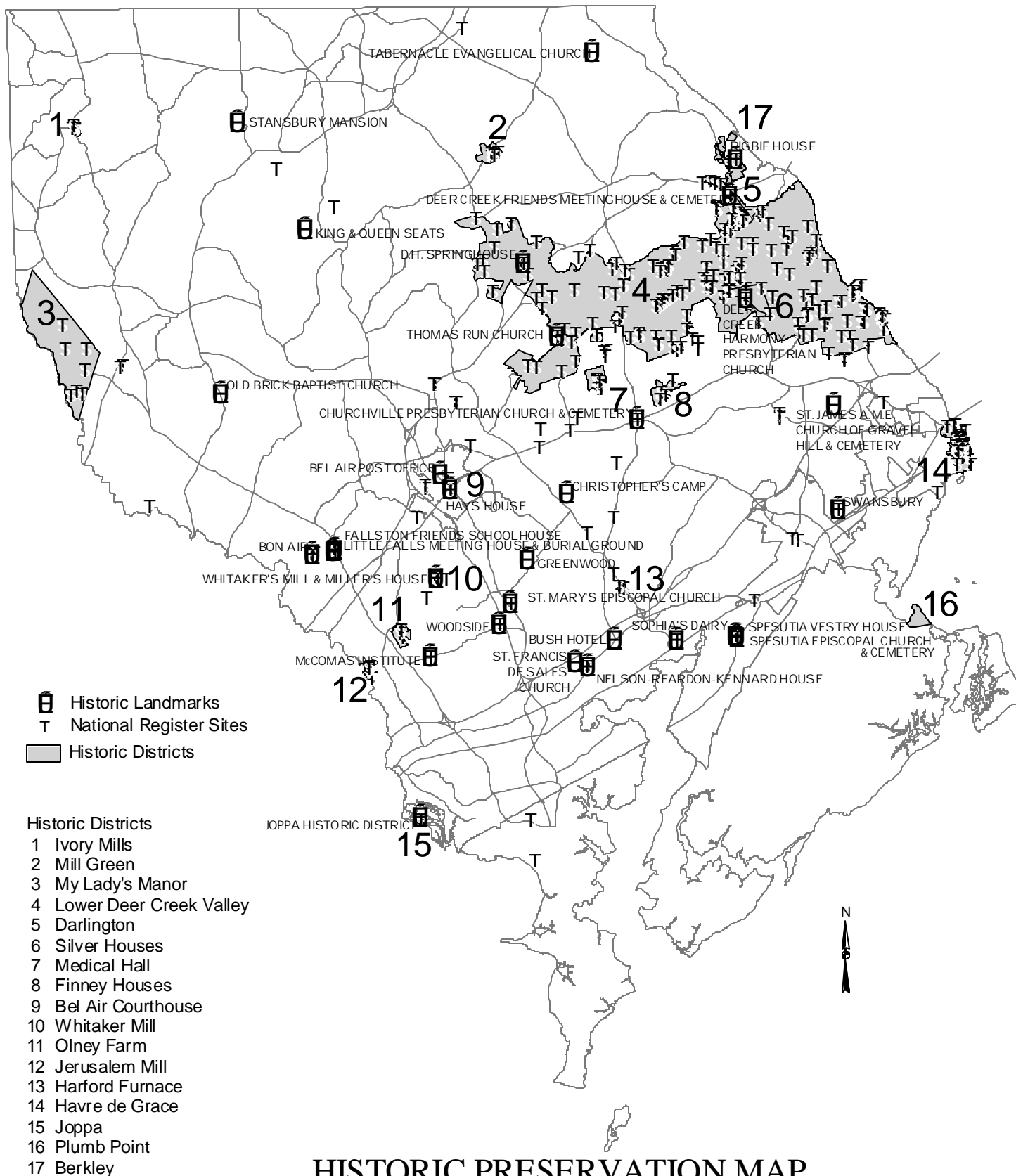
The Historic Preservation Element Plan guides preservation efforts in the County. The Department of Planning and Zoning, in cooperation with the Historic Preservation Commission, oversees implementation of the Plan. The Department assists the Historic Preservation Commission to respond to citizen and governmental inquiries about historic sites, to act as a liaison between history-minded private groups and County government, to encourage and assist private property owners to nominate sites to the National Register or County Landmarks lists, and to generally oversee preservation efforts in Harford County.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION POLICY 1 - Foster awareness of the benefits of historic preservation among the County's citizens.

Implementation Strategies

1. Review and revise the Historic Preservation Element Plan.
2. Develop a procedure to maintain and update historic inventories on a regular basis.
3. Require documentation of historic resources that cannot be renovated or saved.
4. Develop and implement an educational program that emphasizes the role and benefits of historic preservation.
5. Develop and implement Village Design Standards to help protect the character of designated historic villages.
6. Promote Heritage Tourism as an economic benefit to the County.

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION MAP

HARFORD COUNTY, MARYLAND

Figure 37 □

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SUMMARY

Harford County's rich cultural heritage is reflected in its diverse stock of historic buildings, structures, and sites. Enhancing the County's overall quality of life, these historic resources contribute to the area's attractiveness, lend a sense of community to villages and neighborhoods, and improve the local economy by the visitors and businesses that they draw. Nevertheless, as development and revitalization move forward, the need to improve awareness about the value of these resources increases.

The Historic Preservation Element Plan establishes a strong program for the protection of historic and archeological resources and the education of the community about these resources. While many of the recommendations included in this Plan are still viable, the Historic Preservation Element Plan needs to be reviewed and revised to ensure its consistency with the programs set forth in this Land Use Element Plan. Additional steps also need to be taken to improve the protection, or at a minimum, the documentation of resources that are threatened by neglect or proposed development activities.

Specific guidance needs to be developed that will help to identify historic structures that are in danger of being lost. There should also be directives for working with the owner to either document the resource or incorporate it into the proposed new use in a manner that recognizes its importance to the history of the County.

Education is the main tool the County can use to encourage historic preservation and adaptive reuse. The Historic Preservation Element Plan contains a detailed program that should be followed to enhance the public's knowledge of what owning a historic property means. When implemented, this program will broaden understanding and support for the retention and reuse of historic sites and structures throughout the County.

Protection of historic resources within the County's historic villages and municipalities will help enhance past and future investments by businesses and property owners. An important element of protecting this investment is ensuring that all improvements and development within historic areas is undertaken in a manner consistent with the community's historic and architectural character. To help achieve this, Village Design Standards shall be developed. These standards will be based on a village characterization study that will be completed for each of the historic villages.

Preserving the County's historic and archeological resources provides another economic benefit to the community through heritage tourism. The importance of heritage tourism is evident in the State's commitment to the Rural Legacy and Maryland Heritage Area Programs. Harford County has two designated Rural Legacy areas, and it is home to a Certified Maryland Heritage Area along the Susquehanna River. Rural Legacy helps to protect the rural and historic character of an area through land acquisitions and easements, while the Heritage Area Program supports projects that enhance the experience of heritage visitors. The Historic Preservation Element Plan defines the role the County should take in supporting these efforts, and it is recommended that these steps be implemented to ensure the expansion of heritage tourism as an economic benefit to the County.

NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL: Preserve and protect the County's natural environment.

The County recognizes that unique and plentiful natural resources are a necessity for the quality of life that is desirable to residents and visitors. From the many streams and rivers emptying into the Chesapeake Bay, to mineral resources supplying materials to the economic development of the region, the County's natural resources are valuable assets that contribute to the quality of life of residents.

One of the primary functions of the Land Use Element Plan is to manage development in a manner that ensures compatibility with identified natural features, while minimizing the potential for long-term adverse impacts on the County's environment. Complementing the Land Use Element Plan is the Natural Resources Element Plan, prepared by the County in 1998, which addresses, in more detail, protection of the County's natural resources and sensitive area requirements, as directed by the Maryland Planning Act of 1992.

Natural Resources

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - Protect water quality and quantity.

Clean water is fundamental to the quality of life of Harford County residents. Whether it is for a safe drinking water supply, or for recreational or aesthetic purposes, Harford County must protect the quality and quantity of its surface and ground water resources. This can best be accomplished by addressing land use activities and resource protection on a watershed basis. There are nine major watersheds in Harford County, draining to the Susquehanna River, Bush River, and Gunpowder River, and ultimately to the Chesapeake Bay. Protection of the County's water resources in turn results in positive impacts to the Bay.

NATURAL RESOURCE POLICY 1 - Protect and maintain high quality surface and ground water resources.

Implementation Strategies

1. Continue to coordinate with the Department of Public Works on watershed studies and initiatives to minimize impacts to water quality from existing and future land uses.
2. Review and revise the Zoning Code to promote low impact development and the use of green building design principles to decrease impervious surfaces and impacts to water quality.
3. Adopt wellhead protection regulations within designated aquifer recharge areas and water supply areas in order to protect the quality and quantity of these resources.
4. Review and revise protection strategies for surface water sources such as Deer Creek and Winters Run.

5. Continue to update and monitor the County's Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program.
6. Advance the goals of the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategies program by working with County departments and local jurisdictions to promote projects that meet the goals of the Chesapeake 2000 Bay Agreement.
7. Review standards for sediment and erosion control and stormwater management; ensure proper maintenance and functioning of these facilities.
8. Review and revise existing programs and, where needed, develop new programs to ensure the continued preservation and protection of the County's air, land, and water resources.
9. Maintain the County's Chesapeake Bay Partners Gold Award in successive years.

CITIZEN ISSUE 2 - Protect all wetlands.

Wetlands are transitional areas between upland and aquatic habitats. There are both tidal and nontidal wetlands. These resources provide a wealth of environmental benefits, including flood management, filtering stormwater of pollutants, and providing habitat for rare plant and animal species. In addition to State regulations protecting these resources, the County's Natural Resource District and Critical Area regulations also contribute to their protection. Harford County works in coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers and Maryland Department of the Environment to enforce wetland regulations.

NATURAL RESOURCE POLICY 2 - Protect and enhance the County's wetland resources.

Implementation Strategies

1. Revise the Natural Resource District regulations per the recommendations of the Builders for the Bay initiative.
2. Encourage the preservation of existing wetlands on development sites.
3. Improve coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Maryland Department of Environment to ensure wetlands regulations are being implemented and enforced.

CITIZEN ISSUE 3 - Protection and wise use of trees and woodlands.

Woodlands are a valuable natural resource, providing a host of benefits. Trees filter air and water, serve as buffers between land uses, provide wildlife habitat and areas for passive recreation, and may be harvested for fiber products such as timber and pulp for paper. Large contiguous expanses of forest occur in the State Parks along Deer Creek, the Little Gunpowder Falls, and the Susquehanna River, as well as in the Broad Creek watershed in the northern end of the County. Conservation of forest resources during the development process is addressed through the County's Forest Conservation provision within the Zoning Code, which requires reforestation or payment of fees-in-lieu for forest impacts. The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program administered by the Soil

Conservation District has resulted in a significant increase in forested stream buffers in the rural area of the County. Efforts should be increased to protect the remaining valuable forest resources in the County, and to reforest/afforest stream valleys and riparian buffers.

NATURAL RESOURCE POLICY 3 - Improve the protection of the County's forest resources.

Implementation Strategies

1. Review the County's Forest Conservation provision within the Zoning Code and other programs regulating activities within forests, to identify areas where program effectiveness and efficiency can be enhanced.
2. Identify and map large contiguous forested areas in the County and investigate mechanisms to conserve these areas.
3. Retain forests on development sites to the greatest extent possible through the use of low impact development techniques, and promote conservation/reforestation over the use of fee-in-lieu.
4. Research incentives for residential lot owners to maintain trees and enhance habitat.

CITIZEN ISSUE 4 - Preserve/set-aside more natural resource areas and increase buffers.

Preservation of natural areas and greenways are important goals for the County to pursue. Two of the largest greenways in the County are the State Parks along the Little Gunpowder Falls and the Susquehanna River. Several State, County, municipal and private organizations are working cooperatively to develop the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway. In this same area the Lower Deer Creek Valley Rural Legacy Area is preserving large contiguous expanses of open space in private ownership. The development of the Ma and Pa Trail System, as well as the preservation of large expanses of land on the Oakington Peninsula through County ownership, are examples of the County's efforts to preserve natural areas.

NATURAL RESOURCE POLICY 4 - Improve the protection and enhancement of open space and greenways in the County, and provide adequate buffers to the County's natural resource areas.

Implementation Strategies

1. Maintain up-to-date inventories of natural resources and sensitive species within the County.
2. Evaluate and revise existing programs to further the preservation and protection of the County's natural environment.
3. Preserve resources within the Development Envelope in order to ensure renewable and sustainable communities.

4. Update the County's Land Preservation and Recreation Plan and the Natural Resources Element Plan.
5. Review and revise existing open space requirements in the Zoning Code and explore opportunities for improvement/enhancement.
6. Target reforestation efforts to riparian buffers and connectivity to existing forest resources.

SUMMARY

Harford County affords its citizens a wealth of natural resources. Natural resource protection has been, and will continue to be, a major focus of the County's land use planning process. Environmental protection has been realized through a number of existing programs, which include the Natural Resources District, the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Management Program, the Floodplain Ordinance, and the Forest Conservation provisions of the Zoning Code. The Natural Resources District, one of the first local stream and wetlands protection programs in the State, protects streams, steep slopes, floodplains, and wetlands with development restrictions and buffers. The Critical Area Program restricts development near the Chesapeake Bay and protects fish and wildlife habitats. The Floodplain Ordinance restricts construction within the 100-year floodplain. Finally, the Forest Conservation provisions address the need to maintain forested areas throughout the County as development occurs. In addition, the County recently adopted new stormwater management regulations that address both water quantity and quality. As a result of the new regulations, stormwater flow mimics the natural flow of water resulting in reduced impacts on stream channels. All of these programs are working to protect the County's natural resources during the development process. These programs will be reviewed to determine where improvements can be made.

The County has adopted a Natural Resources Element Plan (NREP) to complement the County's Land Use Element Plan and further the initiatives of the Maryland Planning Act of 1992. The Act requires local jurisdictions to incorporate environmental stewardship in land use plans through the direction of the eight "Visions," one of which states that sensitive areas be protected. Harford County's Natural Resource Element Plan fulfills this mandate. The NREP inventories the County's major natural resources, lays out a series of goals, objectives and recommendations to preserve and protect the County's resources, describes current regulatory measures and resource protection programs, and presents an action strategy to meet the goals and objectives of the Plan. The NREP will be updated to incorporate new programs and initiatives to better protect the County's resources.

The Bush River Watershed Management Plan is the first comprehensive watershed management plan in the County. It was completed in 2003 and presents a strategy to improve the overall conditions in the Bush River watershed and reduce pollutant loads. This watershed covers a third of the County, with a large portion lying within the Development Envelope. A large percentage of the County's population resides within this watershed; therefore, education of the public and development of a stewardship ethic are essential to fostering a restoration of our urban watersheds. The County is committed to maintaining ecological health and vitality within the Development Envelope, as well as preserving our rural heritage, in order to have sustainable and livable communities. An implementation committee is in the process of being formed to oversee

implementation of the Bush River Plan through the protection of “sensitive” subwatersheds and the restoration of “impacted” subwatersheds.

The Department of Public Works, in coordination with the Department of Planning and Zoning, will continue to study the County’s watersheds. The protection and enhancement of stream buffers and wetland resources, preservation of forested lands, promotion of low impact development techniques, and preservation of rare habitats will remain a priority to help assure the ecological health, vitality, and continuity of the County’s natural resources.

Protection of the County’s water resources also is essential to maintaining a clean and adequate supply of drinking water. Drinking water in the County is supplied by both surface and ground water resources, and includes both public water supplies as well as private systems (Figure 38). Within the Development Envelope, public drinking water is supplied by the Winter’s Run Watershed -- covered by the Bush River Watershed Plan, as well as the Susquehanna Aqueduct operated by Baltimore City, whose water supply comes from either the Loch Raven Reservoir or the Susquehanna River. The Deer Creek Watershed is also a source of drinking water for Aberdeen Proving Grounds. The Army recently privatized this operation, transferring it to the City of Aberdeen. Watershed protection programs within these source water areas are critical to maintaining the quality and quantity of these supplies.

In addition to the surface water sources, groundwater resources are an important element of the County’s drinking water supply. The Perryman wellfield provides approximately three million gallons per day to the County’s public water supply. In a study completed in 1997, recharge zones for the wellfield were identified and protection strategies were presented. The County will adopt the protection strategies presented in the “Perryman Wellhead Protection Plan” as part of this Plan in order to ensure that this high quality water source remains usable.

Smaller community-based groundwater supply systems exist in several communities within the County; some have wellhead protection strategies adopted through Community Associations. The Maryland Department of Environment is in the process of completing source water assessments for all small community-based water systems. The County will pursue a strategy to help protect all of these groundwater resources, including individual wells in rural areas that provide drinking water for residents not served by public systems. Watershed protection strategies, whether in urban or rural watersheds, are essential to maintaining adequate and safe water resources for a multitude of needs.

The Natural Resources Element Plan also calls for the County to streamline and coordinate existing local environmental programs with those of other State and Federal agencies, such as the Chesapeake Bay Tributaries Strategies Program and forest and wetlands regulatory protection. In 2000, Harford County signed the Chesapeake Bay Local Partnership Agreement, committing the County, along with other jurisdictions throughout Maryland, to partnering with the State to assist in implementing the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement, charting a course for the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Harford County lies within the Upper Western Shore Tributary Basin, and is working with the Upper Western Shore Tributary Team and the State of Maryland to develop Tributary Strategies to help the watershed meet nutrient reduction goals established by the Bay Program. As Harford County works to preserve and protect its own environmental integrity, these efforts will help implement the Tributary Strategies.

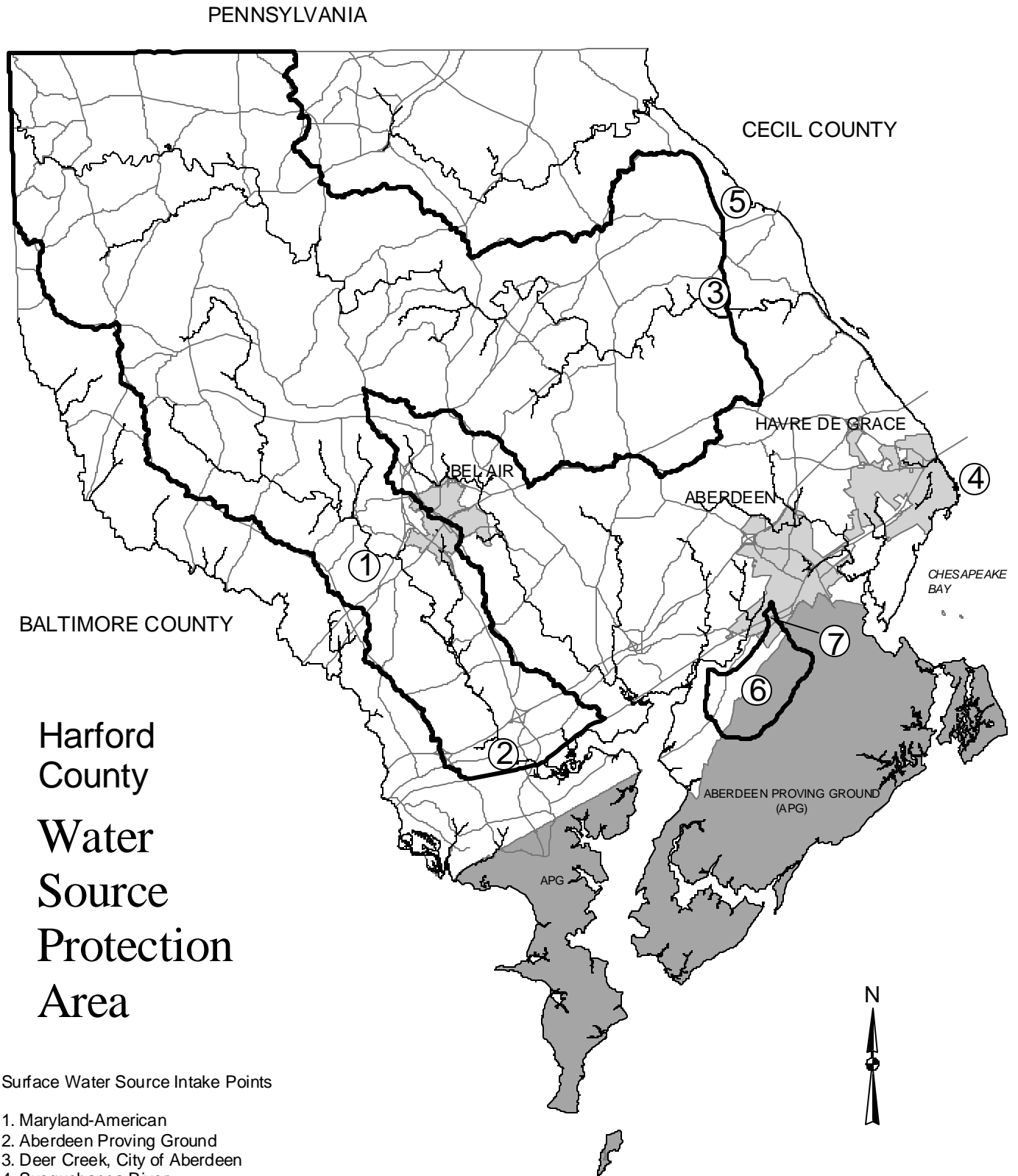


Figure 38

Source: Harford County Planning & Zoning.

- 6. Harford County Wellfields
- 7. City of Aberdeen Wellfields

NOTE: The Susquehanna River also serves as a public water source for Havre de Grace, Harford County, and Baltimore City.

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Mineral Resources

GOAL: Manage the County's mineral resources to provide for current and future production in harmony with their community setting.

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - Ensure the compatibility and viability of existing mineral resource operations with the needs of the surrounding community.

The State of Maryland identified the need to protect and manage mineral resources, and requires that this be an element of the comprehensive planning process. Harford County is underlain by a wide variety of extractable minerals. There are currently eight mining operations with active permits located in various areas of the County. These operations provide valuable, nonrenewable natural resources that are vital to maintaining a sound, balanced, and diversified local economy. The economic importance of mining industries is significant to the County, and must be balanced with the quality of life issues of surrounding residents. Mining operations and reclamation plans must meet the needs of operators, and address the needs of surrounding residents.

MINERAL RESOURCE POLICY 1 - Manage the County's mineral resources to provide for current and future production in harmony with their community setting.

Implementation Strategies

1. Work with the community and the State to ensure that mining operation plans are designed to protect the environment and address compatibility with surrounding land uses.
2. Review existing County regulations to ensure that they adequately address buffer zones, minimization of impacts to surrounding land uses, and standards and procedures for expansion.

CITIZEN ISSUE 2 - Appropriate reuse of mineral extraction sites.

Prior to the end of mining operations, reclamation plans must be developed to address site stabilization and the subsequent use of the site. The mine operators, as well as permitting agencies and surrounding landowners must all be involved in the development of reclamation plans. The Joppa/Joppatowne Community Plan, adopted in 2002, addresses restoration of the mineral extraction sites located within that community area and states that there is a strong consensus that these areas be reclaimed as green space. There is also strong support within the Aberdeen/Havre de Grace and Whiteford/Cardiff communities to discourage the use of abandoned quarries as landfills because of the potential impacts to groundwater.

MINERAL RESOURCE POLICY 2 - Plan for the future reclamation of inactive mining sites in order to protect the natural environment and ensure compatibility with surrounding uses.

Implementation Strategies

1. Work with the community, the State, and the site owners to ensure that restoration plans are both compatible with surrounding land uses and adaptable for alternate land uses.
2. Work with the community and the State to ensure that restoration plans are designed to protect the environment.
3. Create a framework for developing restoration plans.

SUMMARY

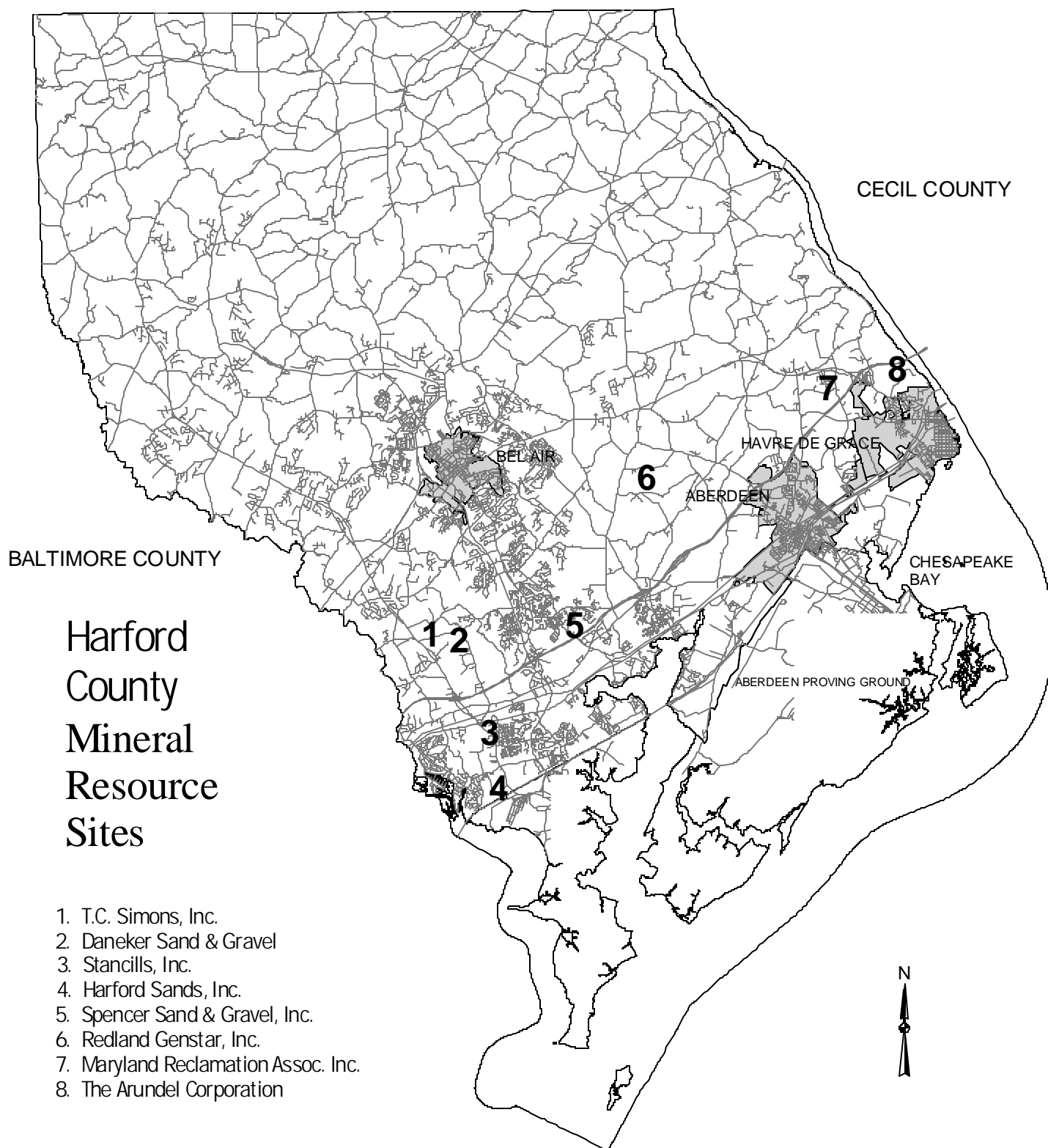
An important natural resource to be addressed by the County, especially for its economic significance, is mineral resources. The State of Maryland has identified the need to protect and manage mineral resources and requires all counties to prepare a mineral resources element as part of their comprehensive planning process. That element must coordinate local land use planning with the programs and goals of the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE). These plans must contain provisions for protection of the natural environment and identification of subsequent uses which are beneficial and compatible with the surrounding area.

While most of the mining operations in Harford County occur in the U. S. Route 40/I-95 corridor, remnants of past mining activity can be found in other parts of the County, most notably the slate and green marble quarries in the Whiteford-Cardiff area. A map of sites with permits recognized by the Mineral, Oil, and Gas Division of MDE is provided in Figure 39. Harford County has been fortunate to have recoverable deposits of these minerals, which provide the County with an inexpensive and convenient source of building materials. Roads, residences, commercial buildings, public utilities, and industrial facilities require the use of these materials. Mineral extraction industries also provide jobs and income as mined-materials are frequently transported to markets outside of the County.

Mineral extraction industries often find themselves in conflict with surrounding land uses, frequently because they lie within the Development Envelope. Assuring the continued viability of these resources, while maintaining a high quality of life for residents, will require the County to become actively engaged in addressing concerns regarding compatibility of uses and site reclamation. Although State law vests much of the regulatory authority regarding mining operations with State agencies, communication and coordination between State and County agencies is essential in the regulation of the mining industry.

Reclamation of mining sites is an important issue to the surrounding community. Plans for reclamation of these sites must be a cooperative effort on the part of mine operators, permitting agencies, and surrounding landowners to assure that reclamation, restoration and/or stabilization plans are compatible with surrounding land uses, address monitoring, maintenance and bonding requirements, and address the concerns of the community. The County views the protection of groundwater quality as a primary objective in all reclamation plans.

PENNSYLVANIA



NOTE: Sites with active permits as of October 1, 2003.
SOURCE: Maryland Department of the Environment,
Water Resources Administration, Surface Mining Division.

Figure 39



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: To become a dynamic and diverse business destination where industry supports the highest quality of living.

Harford County has implemented an economic development program that promotes business growth and new investment that generates valuable employment opportunities and supports the development of a sustainable, dynamic economy over the long-term. Specifically, this effort is aimed at capitalizing on Harford's strategic mid-Atlantic location in the I-95 corridor and proximity to the regional assets located in the Baltimore metropolitan region. Cost advantages, "Fast Track" permitting capabilities, and the commerce and resources associated with the U.S. Army's advanced testing, engineering, research and development, and training mission at Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) are additional assets.

The Office of Economic Development has developed a Technology Development Strategic Plan that advocates higher education program development and targets the technology sectors. The Plan identifies two technology districts along the I-95/U.S. Route 40 corridor. The Central Harford Technology District along U.S. Route 40 and centering on Water's Edge, and the technology district located in the downtown area of Havre de Grace.

CITIZEN ISSUE 1 - Direct industrial and commercial growth to suitable areas.

There are currently 8,874 acres of land zoned for industrial use in Harford County, of which 2,866 acres are completely developed, leaving 6,008 acres of partially or completely undeveloped sites in the County. There are 773 industrial sites within the Development Envelope consisting of 7,969 acres of land. Of these, 311 sites totaling 5,314 acres are partially or completely undeveloped.

Suitable sites take into consideration the infrastructure, Adequate Public Facilities legislation, design compatibility and characteristics of the area. These areas are located within the Development Envelope and protect the agricultural areas of the County. A majority of suitable sites are located along the southern region of the County along Interstate 95 and U. S. Route 40. The Edgewood Community Plan identifies opportunities for commercial and industrial uses within existing industrial parks and along U. S. Route 40. The Joppa/Joppatowne Community Plan calls for the establishment of a Planned Employment Center on MD 152 south of the I-95 interchange. This is visualized as an upscale mixed-use employment center intended to attract high-end office users in the technical, research, and financial services.

The creation of the Mixed Office (MO) land use category is designed to direct industrial and commercial growth to prime economic development areas. These areas fall within two main interchanges of Interstate 95, located at MD Routes 22 and 543. Development under the MO designation would provide opportunities for corporate offices, research & development facilities, and other uses that will provide the employment sector with high quality jobs. Therefore, formal establishment of use standards and guidelines for the MO designated locations in the County is essential to accommodate targeted development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY 1 - Promote the location of industrial and commercial development in suitable areas.

Implementation Strategies

1. Encourage the growth of employment centers at the major intersections of I-95 at Route 152, Route 543, Route 22, and Route 155.
2. Explore means of coordinating development efforts with the County's three municipalities.
3. Expand the Higher Education Applied Technology (HEAT) Center.
4. Provide flexible "mixed-use" zoning tools that would promote the redevelopment of areas in need of revitalization.
5. Provide incentives to industries that support their employees utilizing public transportation.
6. Consider rezoning excess commercial/retail zoned land to provide more flexible, mixed-use opportunities.
7. Study areas along the I-95 corridor to identify the potential for new employment centers in accordance with the Joppa/Joppatowne Community Plan, only that portion of the I-95/152 interchange inside the Development Envelope will be included in a study area.

CITIZEN ISSUE 2 - Improve employment opportunities within the County through high technology business.

Harford County, in association with Claggett Wolfe Associates, recently completed the Technology Development Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan). The Strategic Plan indicates that the County is in the early stages of integrating commercial technology clusters within its economy. The Strategic Plan also notes that the County offers the essential ingredients needed to support and sustain the growth of technology ventures. The County has attracted a solid base of growing technology ventures such as California Microwave, Northrop Grumman Information Technologies, Booz Allen Hamilton, Battelle's Eastern Science & Technology Center, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), SURVICE Engineering, Smiths Detection, SafeNet and Nutramax Laboratories.

This Strategic Plan analyzes Harford County's unique strengths and recommends steps to help fuel industry growth and shape the County's future. Specific actions to help foster defense diversification activity, strengthen mission operations at Aberdeen Proving Ground, expand higher education resources, and enhance long-term quality-of-life factors are included. In total, 83 specific actions are proposed to promote development of what the Strategic Plan identified as Harford County's eight emerging technology clusters.

Further, the Strategic Plan evaluates the opportunities, current industry trends and determines that eight technology sectors offered the best opportunity to grow and develop in Harford County. These sectors include: Advanced and Engineered Materials, Advanced Manufacturing Technologies,

Automotive Design and Testing, Information Technology, Materials Testing, Technical Services, Biotechnology Scale-Up, Environmental Services.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2 - Implement a program aimed at enticing technology industries to locate and expand within the County.

Implementation Strategies

1. Collect, examine and analyze information that will be useful in monitoring technology development activity.
2. Promote support systems, such as incubator facilities, that address the needs of the technology industry.
3. Develop a telecom infrastructure map serving each of the technology districts, with consideration to redundant service, and explore alternatives to improving telecom infrastructure.
4. Promote workforce technology development through education, workshops and other resources.
5. Promote technology education in the Harford County Public School system.
6. Encourage technology industries to locate and expand at the HEAT Center and MO designated areas.
7. Encourage technology industries within the Technology Districts.
8. Support the retention and expansion of Research & Development activities at Aberdeen Proving Ground.
9. Enhance programs to support technology-oriented development.

CITIZEN ISSUE 3 - Provide infrastructure-funding mechanisms for Economic Development

Revenue-generating tools should be explored to help address infrastructure requirements within the County, particularly for schools and roads. These revenue sources would then defray the costs of the improvements required to serve the general population.

On the Perryman Peninsula, a significant portion of industrially zoned land remains undeveloped due to a lack of infrastructure. While the Peninsula has long been recognized as a significant economic engine for the County, development of the area has not occurred in part because of the road network. A visioning workshop for the Perryman Peninsula was completed in 2001, addressing the issues facing the development of the 2,000 acres of industrial zoned property on the Peninsula. This process addressed the need to relieve the impacts of development, such as transportation, and to

allow for a mixture of uses that would reduce these impacts while also protecting the Perryman Wellfield.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY 3 - Improve infrastructure-funding mechanisms for responsible economic growth.

Implementation Strategies

1. Develop a new revenue source dedicated to transportation improvements associated with economic development objectives.
2. Consider legislation for special tax districts and/or developer agreements.
3. Explore developer incentives for investment in infrastructure.
4. Provide development initiatives to guide and foster development of the Perryman Peninsula while protecting the Perryman Wellfield.
5. Support public private partnerships that address infrastructure issues.

CITIZEN ISSUE 4 - Concerned with the encroachment from the Whiteford Industrial zoned property.

The Whiteford/Cardiff area has an abundance of industrial zoned land. For the most part, this industrial zoning was carried over from previous quarry and cannery operations. The community has expressed concern about the development of these properties and would like to see them redeveloped in a manner that addresses the needs of the area. Likewise, the County desires to concentrate industrial uses on more suitable land within the Designated Growth Areas.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY 4 - Explore appropriate reuses for industrially zoned lands in rural areas.

Implementation Strategies

1. Explore alternative zoning classifications for the GI zoned properties in the Whiteford area that would foster uses appropriate for the community.
2. Protect the rural characteristics and natural resources of this area.
3. Attract agriculture-related businesses to existing but under-utilized industrial and commercial land in the rural area.

CITIZEN ISSUE 5 - Agriculture is the economic backbone of the County -- encourage farming

A component of the County's economic development strategy is focused on maintaining and developing a strong agriculture economy. Over the past years, economic development strategies

have included changes to the agricultural zoning district to allow more flexibility in uses on a farming operation and farmers markets to provide additional avenues for selling local products. The 1997 “Agricultural Economic Development Initiative” proposes specific actions and programs for the purpose of preserving and enhancing the economic viability of agriculture in Harford County.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY 5 - Enhance the economic viability of agriculture.

Implementation Strategies

1. Continue to develop and implement agricultural economic development strategies that enhance continued agriculture production.
2. Expand the opportunities for industry diversification and on-farm production.
3. Enhance existing farm markets and expand when feasible.

SUMMARY

The Harford County Office of Economic Development understands the increasing importance of location to businesses and the numerous factors contributing to the complexity of today’s corporate location decisions. Harford County offers businesses access to some of the world’s richest high-tech resources, including the technology assets of APG. Through the Team APG Business Development Office, business leaders have access to information, opportunities and state-of-the-art facilities available at APG. Government efforts to encourage technology development are guided by the Technology Development Strategic Plan, crafted to support the expansion and success of a diverse, knowledge-based economy.

Businesses are also drawn to Harford County’s unique quality of life. The community offers strong schools, safe streets, open space and a wide array of recreation opportunities, including some of the finest golf in the world. The County is dedicated to ensuring our business environment enhances the competitive advantage and success of the business base.

Aberdeen Proving Ground is an economic generator for Harford County and a key element in the nation’s defense and Homeland Security effort. APG is the Army’s oldest active proving ground and the origin of numerous technical achievements in military intelligence, medical research, engineering, and computer technology. Today, APG’s capabilities represent every facet of technology and enhance its emergence as a viable business partner, combining the best of industry with the latest in research and development expertise. Battelle’s Eastern Science Technology Center is also seen as a large technology generator for commercial and intellectual property activity.

Building on a growing technology industry, the County’s Technology Development Strategic Plan identifies specific steps that should be undertaken to expand this economic venture. The land use and infrastructure planning recommendations included in the Strategic Plan should be coordinated with this Plan. Consideration should be given to updating the Zoning Code to improve land use patterns in technology districts to: restrict incompatible uses, encourage mixed-use development that is supportive of the technology sectors, and create a sense of place for employees. The focus of

technology development, which is concentrated in the Technology Districts, should be evaluated and the need for zoning changes to support this technology cluster should be evaluated.

The MO designations identified on the Land Use Element Plan, have defined boundaries within which targeted uses should be located. In no case, shall this designation serve as an opening of the Development Envelope. These areas are planned to promote major economic development opportunities such as corporate offices, research and development facilities, and high-tech services which create significant job opportunities and investment benefits. These areas may also include limited retail uses to service the employment center. In order to help ensure that development of these areas is completed in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding area, the Zoning Code should be revised to include specific standards for development including use percentages.

Making the most of existing infrastructure, strategic location and available tax incentive programs, recent planning efforts have produced positive results in the U.S. Route 40 Corridor. The Commercial Revitalization District (CRD) was developed to help facilitate new investment and business growth along U.S. Route 40 that would bring professional, service, and technology-related industry. Community “visioning” sessions and County legislative action have resulted in a zoning tool for the 19-mile CRD corridor. Enacted in July of 2000, the CRD provides more flexible use and development regulations that to date have resulted in high value, mixed-use redevelopment projects. Projects such as Water’s Edge are helping diversify the economic base, improve quality of life and build a new future for the U. S. Route 40 Corridor and Harford County. More opportunities and projects such as these should be explored and encouraged.

The Perryman Peninsula offers the County another opportunity for economic development. Located adjacent to the City of Aberdeen and Aberdeen Proving Ground, the Perryman Peninsula is poised for change. A vision plan has been prepared for the area that embraces advances in technology, communication, transportation, and environmental conservation that will help transform the area into a vital community that will serve the County’s economic development needs. Changes to the Zoning Code should be proposed that support the plan for this area, while also protecting the Perryman Wellfield.

Directing industrial and commercial activities to suitable areas requires coordination between the Office of Economic Development and the Department of Planning and Zoning. It is recommended that sufficient inventories of appropriately zoned land be maintained, and that appropriately zoned land be located and developed in a manner harmonious with the surrounding communities. Commercial services should be directed to designated Community and Neighborhood Centers, the municipalities, and Rural Villages. Studies indicate that the County has a sufficient inventory of industrial and commercially zoned land to meet its immediate and foreseeable needs. Therefore, no additional industrial or commercial rezonings will be supported unless upon further review it is determined that the proposed change would serve the needs of the County or community in a particular location. Any additional zoning changes will be subject to a technical analysis to help ensure that the proposed change will not generate adverse impacts in the community.

Harford County recognizes the agricultural community as an important segment of the economy. Economic Development and local farmers work together to generate public awareness that farms supply \$400 million annually to Harford County’s economy. Ultimate stable growth and economic

viability in the industry is closely tied to other elements in the local and regional economy. The County will continue to support and encourage growth of agribusiness ventures and protect natural resources that fuel this economy. To further support this concept, industrial zoning within the Village of Whiteford should be reexamined. The County should consider a classification that would serve the needs of the village and surrounding area.

The collective impact of all these policies will have a positive impact on the County's businesses and resident workforce by creating an environment for sustainable, long-term economic gains.

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